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Cowper
Hayley

THE LIFE,

AND

POSTHUMOUS WRITINGS,

OF

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQR.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE EARL COWPER.

By WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

"*Observatur oculis ille vir, quo neminem ætas nostra graviorem, sanctiorem, subtiliorem denique tulit: quem ego quum ex admiratione diligere cœpissem, quod evenire contrà solet, magis admiratus sum, postquam penitus inspexi. Inspexi enim penitus: nihil a me ille secretum, nm joculare, non serium, non triste, non lætum.*"

Plinii Epist. Lib. 4, Ep. 17.

VOL. IV.

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FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, LONDON.

1806.

VVW

THE

BOOKSELLER'S ADVERTISEMENT

TO A NEW EDITION OF

COWPER's POEMS,

Which will be published on the first of March, in quarto, with the head of the Author,

ENGRAVED BY BARTOLOZZI,

FROM A DRAWING BY LAWRENCE.

Many of the admirers of Mr. COWPER's writings having expressed a desire of possessing an edition of his Poems which should contain his devotional pieces with the rest—this volume has been supplied with two Appendixes.——The first includes his Translations from the works of Madame GUION, which he presented in manuscript to the Revd. WILLIAM BULL, who printed them separately in a small volume; and it is with his permission that they are here inserted. The second consists of Poems which were written during his residence in the parish of the Revd. JOHN NEWTON, with whom he joined in composing a volume for social worship and private use, which was published in 1779, under the title of "Olney Hymns."

This quarto edition of the Poems, with the letters and poetical pieces published in Mr. HAYLEY's Life of Cowper (to which this volume will form a very proper companion) will comprise all the works of the author except his Version of Homer, printed in two volumes quarto and four volumes octavo, and his Translations from Milton's Latin and Italian Poems, with parts of a Commentary on the Paradise Lost, now preparing for the press by his Biographer. The last will be published for the benefit of an Orphan, the Godson of Mr. COWPER, in one volume quarto, price two guineas.

Subscriptions for the Milton will be received by J. JOHNSON, in Saint Paul's Church Yard.

JOHN SARGENT, Esqr. M. P. and SAMUEL SMITH, Esqr. M. P. have kindly undertaken to act as Trustees on the occasion for this interesting Orphan.

THE

LIFE OF COWPER.

LET us return from a digression of sorrow, from the grave of Cowper's friend Rose, to Cowper himself in a state of chearfulness at Eartham, in the year 1792!—Pleased, and enlivened as he was, by the new scenery around him, he failed not to testify, with great tenderness, his frequent remembrance of the friends most deservedly endeared to him in his own village.

LETTER I.

To Mrs. COURTENAY.

Eartham August 25, 1792.

Without waiting for an answer to my last, I send my dear Catharina the epitaph she

desired, composed as well as I could compose it in a place where every object being still new to me, distracts my attention, and makes me as awkward at verse as if I had never dealt in it. Here it is.

EPITAPH ON FOP:

A DOG,

BELONGING TO LADY THROCKMORTON.

Though once a puppy, and though Fop by name,
Here moulders one, whose bones some honour claim;
No sycophant, although of spaniel race!
And though no hound, a martyr to the chace!
Ye squirrels, rabbits, leverets, rejoice!
Your haunts no longer echo to his voice.
This record of his fate exulting view,
He died worn out with vain pursuit of you!

"Yes!" the indignant shade of Fop replies,
"And worn with vain pursuit, man also dies!"

I am here, as I told you in my last, delightfully situated, and in the enjoyment of all that the most friendly hospitality can impart; yet do I neither forget Weston, nor my friends at Weston: On the contrary, I have at length, though much and kindly

pressed to make a longer stay, determined on the day of our departure—on the seventeenth of September we shall leave Eartham; four days will be necesary to bring us home again, for I am under a promise to General Cowper to dine with him on the way, which cannot be done comfortably, either to him or to ourselves, unless we sleep that night at Kingston.

The air of this place has been, I believe, beneficial to us both. I indeed was in tolerable health before I set out, but have acquired since I came, both a better appetite, and a knack of sleeping almost as much in a single night as formerly in two. Whether double quantities of that article will be favourable to me as a poet, time must shew. About myself however I care little, being made of materials so tough, as not to threaten me now, at the end of so many *lustrums,* with any thing like a speedy dissolution. My chief concern has been about Mrs. Unwin, and my chief comfort at this moment is, that she likewise has received, I hope, considerable benefit by the journey.

Tell my dear George that I begin to long to behold him again, and did it not savour of ingratitude to the friend, under whose roof I am so happy

at present, should be impatient to find myself once more under yours.

Adieu! my dear Catharina. I have nothing to add in the way of news, except that Romney has drawn me in crayons, by the suffrage of all here, extremely like.

W. C.

LETTER II.

To the Revd. Mr. HURDIS.

Eartham, August 26, 1792.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your kind, but very affecting, Letter found me not at Weston, to which place it was directed, but in a bower of my friend Hayley's garden at Eartham, where I was sitting with Mrs. Unwin. We both knew the moment we saw it from whom it came, and observing a red seal, both comforted ourselves that all was well at Burwash: but we soon felt that we were called not to rejoice, but to mourn with you—we do indeed sincerely mourn with you, and if it will afford you any consolation to

know it, you may be assured that every eye here has testified what our hearts have suffered for you. Your loss is great, and your disposition I perceive such as exposes you to feel the whole weight of it; I will not add to your sorrow by a vain attempt to assuage it; your own good sense, and the piety of your principles, will, of course, suggest to you the most powerful motives of acquiescence in the will of God. You will be sure to recollect that the stroke, severe as it is, is not the stroke of an enemy, but of a father; and will find I trust hereafter, that like a father he has done you good by it. Thousands have been able to say, and myself as loud as any of them, it has been good for me that I was afflicted; but time is necessary to work us to this persuasion, and in due time it shall be yours. Mr. Hayley, who tenderly sympathises with you, has enjoined me to send you as pressing an invitation as I can frame, to join me at this place. I have every motive to wish your consent, both your benefit and my own, which, I believe, would be abundantly answered by your coming, ought to make me eloquent in such a cause. Here you will find silence and retirement in perfection, when you would seek them, and here such company as I have no doubt would suit you, all cheerful, but

not noisy; and all alike disposed to love you: you and I seem to have a fair opportunity of meeting. It were a pity we should be in the same county and not come together. I am here till the seventeenth of September, an interval that will afford you time to make the necessary arrangements, and to gratify me at last with an interview, which I have long desired. Let me hear from you soon, that I may have double pleasure, the pleasure of expecting, as well as that of seeing you.

Mrs. Unwin, I thank God, though still a sufferer by her last illness, is much better, and has received considerable benefit by the air of Eartham. She adds to mine her affectionate compliments, and joins me and Hayley in this invitation.

Mr. Romney is here, and a young man a Cousin of mine. I tell you who we are, that you may not be afraid of us.

Adieu! May the Comforter of all the afflicted, who seek him, be yours. God bless you.

W. C.

LETTER III.

To Lady HESKETH.

Eartham, August 26, 1792.

I know not how it is, my dearest Coz. but in a new scene, and surrounded by strange objects, I find my powers of thinking dissipated to a degree, that makes it difficult to me even to write a Letter, and even a Letter to you; but such a Letter as I can, I will, and have the fairest chance to succeed this morning, Hayley, Romney, Hayley's Son, and Beau, being all gone together to the sea for bathing. The sea, you must know, is nine miles off, so that unless stupidity prevent, I shall have opportunity to write not only to you, but to poor Hurdis also, who is broken-hearted for the loss of his favorite Sister, lately dead; and whose Letter, giving an account of it, which I received yesterday, drew tears from the eyes of all our party. My only comfort respecting even yourself is, that you write in good spirits, and assure me that you are in a state of recovery; otherwise I should mourn not only for Hurdis, but for myself, lest a certain event should reduce me, and

in a short time too, to a situation as distressing as his; for though nature designed you only for my Cousin, you have had a Sister's place in my affections ever since I knew you. The reason is, I suppose, that having no Sister, the Daughter of my own Mother, I thought it proper to have one, the Daughter of yours. Certain it is, that I can by no means afford to lose you, and that unless you will be upon honour with me, to give me always a true account of yourself, at least when we are not together, I shall always be unhappy, because always suspicious that you deceive me.

Now for ourselves. I am, without the least dissimulation, in good health; my spirits are about as good as you have ever seen them; and if encrease of appetite, and a double portion of sleep, be advantageous, such are the advantages that I have received from this migration. As to that gloominess of mind, which I have had these twenty years, it cleaves to me even here, and could I be translated to Paradise, unless I left my body behind me, would cleave to me even there also. It is my companion for life, and nothing will ever divorce us. So much for myself. Mrs. Unwin is evidently the better for her jaunt, though by no means as she was before this last attack;

still wanting help when she would rise from her seat, and a support in walking; but she is able to use more exercise than she could at home, and moves with rather a less tottering step. God knows what he designs for me, but when I see those who are dearer to me than myself, distempered and enfeebled, and myself as strong as in the days of my youth, I tremble for the solitude in which a few years may place me. I wish her and you to die before me, but not till I am more likely to follow immediately. Enough of this!

Romney has drawn me in crayons, and in the opinion of all here, with his best hand, and with the most exact resemblance possible.

The seventeenth of September is the day on which I intend to leave Eartham. We shall then have been six weeks resident here; a holiday time long enough for a man who has much to do. And now farewell!

W. C.

P. S. Hayley, whose love for me seems to be truly that of a brother, has given me his picture, drawn by Romney about fifteen years ago: an admirable likeness.

LETTER IV.

To Lady HESKETH.

Eartham, Sept. 9, 1792.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,

I determine, if possible, to send you one more Letter, or at least, if possible, once more to send you something like one, before we leave Eartham. But I am in truth so unaccountably local in the use of my pen, that, like the man in the fable, who could leap well no where but at Rhodes, I seem incapable of writing at all, except at Weston. This is, as I have already told you, a delightful place; more beautiful scenery I have never beheld, nor expect to behold; but the charms of it, uncommon as they are, have not in the least alienated my affections from Weston. The genius of that place suits me better, it has an air of snug concealment, in which a disposition like mine feels peculiarly gratified; whereas here I see from every window, woods like forests, and hills like mountains, a wildness, in short, that rather increases my natural melancholy, and which were it not for the agreeables I find within, would soon convince me that mere

change of place can avail me little. Accordingly, I have not looked out for a house in Sussex, nor shall.

The intended day of our departure continues to be the seventeenth. I hope to re-conduct Mrs. Unwin to the Lodge with her speech considerably mended; but it is in the article of speech chiefly, and in her powers of walking, that she is sensible of much improvement. Her sight, and her hand still fail her, so that she can neither read nor work; mortifying circumstances both to her, who is never willingly idle.

On the eighteenth I purpose to dine with the General, and to rest that night at Kingston, but the pleasure I shall have in the interview will hardly be greater than the pain I shall feel at the end of it, for we shall part, probably to meet no more.

Johnny, I know, has told you that Mr. Hurdis is here. Distressed by the loss of his Sister, he has renounced the place where she died for ever, and is about to enter on a new course of life at Oxford. You would admire him much: He is gentle in his manners, and delicate in his person, resembling our poor friend Unwin, both in face and figure, more than

any one I have seen. But he has not, at least he has not at present, his vivacity.

I have corresponded since I came here with Mrs. Courtenay, and had yesterday a very kind Letter from her.

Adieu, my dear; may God bless you. Write to me as soon as you can after the twentieth. I shall then be at Weston, and indulging myself in the hope that I shall ere long see you there also.

W. C.

The reader will perceive from the last Letter, that Cowper, amused as he was with the scenery of Sussex, began to feel the powerful attraction of home. Indeed the infirm state of Mrs. Unwin, and the declining season of the year, rendered it highly desirable for the tender travellers to be restored to their own fire-side by the time they proposed.

Their departure from Eartham was a scene of affectionate anxiety, and a perfect contrast to the gaiety of their arrival. The kindness of Cowper relieved my solicitude concerning their journey, by the

following Letter from Kingston. I insert it as a pleasing memorial of that peculiar tenderness of heart, which conspired with his most admirable talents, to render him the most interesting of men. From an ardent, and, I hope, a laudable desire to display this endearing characteristic of my friend, I shall add a collection of extracts from his Letters to me, rather more copious than I at first intended.

LETTER V.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

The Sun, at Kingston, Sept. 18, 1792.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

With no sinister accident to retard or terrify us, we find ourselves at a quarter before one, arrived safe at Kingston. I left you with a heavy heart, and with a heavy heart took leave of our dear Tom, at the bottom of the chalk-hill. But soon after this last separation, my troubles gushed from my eyes, and then I was better.

We must now prepare for our visit to the General. I add no more, therefore, than our dearest re-

membrances and prayers that God may bless you and yours, snd reward you an hundred-fold for all your kindness. Tell Tom I shall always hold him dear for his affectionate attentions to Mrs. Unwin. From her heart the memory of him can never be erased. Johnny loves you all, and has his share in all these acknowledgments.

Adieu,

W. C.

LETTER VI.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Sept. 21, 1792.

MY DEAR HAYLEY,

Chaos himself, even the chaos of Milton, is not surrounded with more confusion, nor has a mind more completely in a hubbub than I experience at the present moment. At our first arrival, after long absence, we find a hundred orders to

ants necessary, a thousand things to be restored

to their proper places and an endless variety of minutiæ to be adjusted; which though individually of little importance, are most momentous in the aggregate. In these circumstances I find myself so indisposed to writing, that, save to yourself, I would on no account attempt it; but to you I will give such a recital as I can, of all that has passed since I sent you that short note from Kingston, knowing that if it be a perplexed recital, you will consider the cause, and pardon it. I will begin with a remark in which I am inclined to think you will agree with me, that there is sometimes more true heroism passing in a corner, and on occasions that make no noise in the world, than has often been exercised by those whom that world esteems her greatest heroes, and on occasions the most illustrious; I hope so at least; for all the heroism I have to boast, and all the opportunities I have of displaying any, are of a private nature. After writing the note I immediately began to prepare for my appointed visit to Ham; but the struggles that I had with my own spirit, labouring as I did under the most dreadful dejection, are never to be told. I would have given the world to have been excused. I went, however, and carried my point against myself, with a heart riven asunder—I have rea-

sons for all this anxiety, which I cannot relate now The visit, however, passed off well, and we returned in the dark to Kingston. I, with a lighter heart than I had known since my departure from Eartham, and Mary too, for she had suffered hardly less than myself, and chiefly on my account. That night we rested well in our inn, and at twenty minutes after eight next morning set off for London; exactly at ten we reached Mr. Rose's door; we drank a dish of chocolate with him, and proceeded, Mr. Rose riding with us as far as St. Albans. From this time we met with no impediment. In the dark, and in a storm, at eight at night, we found ourselves at our own back door. Mrs. Unwin was very near slipping out of the chair in which she was taken from the chaise, but at last was landed safe. We all have had a good night, and are all well this morning.

God bless you my dearest Brother.

W. C.

LETTER VII.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Oct. 2, 1792.

MY DEAR HAYLEY,

A bad night, succeeded by an East wind, and a sky all in sables, have such an effect on my spirits, that if I did not consult my own comfort, more than yours, I should not write to day, for I shall not entertain you much: yet your Letter, though containing no very pleasant tidings, has afforded me some relief, It tells me, indeed, that you have been dispirited yourself, and that poor little Tom, the faithful squire of my Mary, has been seriously indisposed; all this grieves me, but then there is a warmth of heart, and a kindness in it, that do me good. I will endeavour not to repay you in notes of sorrow and despondence, though all my sprightly chords seem broken. In truth, one day excepted, I have not seen the day when I have been chearful since I left you. My spirits, I think, are almost constantly lower than they were; the approach of winter is perhaps the cause, and if it is,

I have nothing better to expect for a long time to come.

Yesterday was a day of assignation with myself, the day of which I said some days before it came, when that day comes I will begin my dissertations. Accordingly when it came I prepared to do so; filled a letter-case with fresh paper, furnished myself with a pretty good pen, and replenished my ink bottle; but partly from one cause, and partly from another, chiefly, however, from distress and dejection, after writing and obliterating about six lines, in the composition of which I spent near an hour, I was obliged to relinquish the attempt. An attempt so unsuccessful could have no other effect than to dishearten me, and it has had that effect to such a degree, that I know not when I shall find courage to make another. At present I shall certainly abstain, since at present I cannot well afford to expose myself to the danger of a fresh mortification.

W. C.

LETTER VIII.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Oct 13, 1792.

I began a Letter to you yesterday, my dearest brother, and proceeded through two sides of the sheet, but so much of my nervous fever found its way into it, that looking it over this morning, I determined not to send it.

I have risen, though not in good spirits, yet in better than I generally do of late, and therefore will not address you in the melancholy tone that belongs to my worst feelings.

I began to be restless about your portrait, and to say, how long shall I have to wait for it? I wished it here for many reasons: the sight of it will be a comfort to me, for I not only love, but am proud of you, as of a conquest made in my old age. Johnny goes to Town on Monday, on purpose to call on Romney, to whom he shall give all proper information concerning its conveyance hither. The name of a man, whom I esteem as I do Romney, ought not

to be unmusical in my ears, but his name will be so till I shall have paid him a debt justly due to him, by doing such poetical honours to it as I intend. Heaven knows, when that intention will be executed, for the muse is still as obdurate and as coy as ever.

Your kind postscript is just arrived, and gives me great pleasure; when I cannot see you myself. it seems some comfort, however, that you have been seen by another known to me; and who will tell me in a few days, that he has seen you. Your wishes to disperse my melancholy would, I am sure, prevail, did that event depend on the warmth and sincerity with which you frame them; but it has baffled both wishes and prayers, and those the most fervent that could be made, so many years, that the case seems hopeless. But no more of this at present!

Your verses to Austen, are as sweet as the honey that they accompany; kind, friendly, witty, and elegant! when shall I be able to do the like! perhaps when my Mary, like your Tom, shall cease to be an invalide, I may recover a power, at least, to do something. I sincerely rejoice in the dear little man's restoration. My Mary continues, I hope, to mend a little.

W. C.

LETTER IX.

To JOHN JOHNSON, Esqr,

Weston, Oct. 19, 1792.

MY DEAREST JOHNNY,

You are too useful when you are here not to be missed, on a hundred occasions daily; and too much domesticated with us, not to be regretted always. I hope, therefore, that your month or six weeks will not be like many that I have known, capable of being drawn out into any length whatever, and productive of nothing but disappointment.

I have done nothing since you went, except that I have composed the better half of a sonnet to Romney; yet even this ought to bear an earlier date, for I began to be haunted with a desire to do it long before we came out of Sussex, and have daily attempted it ever since.

It would be well for the reading part of the world, if the writing part were, many of them, as dull as I am. Yet even this small produce, which my sterile intellect has hardly yielded at last, may serve to convice you that in point of spirits I am not worse.

In fact, I am a little better. The powders and the laudanum together have, for the present at least, abated the fever that consumes them; and in measure as the fever abates, I acquire a less discouraging view of things, and with it a little power to exert myself.

In the evenings I read Baker's Chronicle to Mrs. Unwin, having no other history, and hope in time to be as well versed in it, as his admirer Sir Roger de Coverley.

W. C.

LETTER X.

To JOHN JOHNSON, Esqr.

Weston, Oct. 22, 1792.

MY DEAR JOHNNY,

Here am I with I know not how many letters to answer, and no time to do it in. I exhort you, therefore, to set a proper value on this, as proving your priority in my attentions, though in other respects likely to be of little value.

You do well to sit for your picture, and give very sufficient reasons for doing it; you will also, I doubt not, take care that when future generations shall look at it, some spectator or other shall say, this is the picture of a good man, and a useful one.

And now God bless you, my dear Johnny. I proceed much after the old rate; rising chearless and distressed in the morning, and brightening a little as the day goes on.

Adieu,

W. C.

LETTER XI.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr

Weston, Oct. 28, 1792.

Nothing done, my dearest brother, nor likely to be done at present; yet I purpose in a day or two to make another attempt, to which, however, I shall address myself with fear and trembling, like a man, who having sprained his wrist, dreads to use it. I have not, indeed, like such a man,

injured myself, by any extraordinary exertion, but seem as much enfeebled as if I had. The consciousness that there is so much to do, and nothing done, is a burthen I am not able to bear. Milton especially is my grievance, and I might almost as well be haunted by his ghost, as goaded with continual reproaches for neglecting him. I will, therefore begin; I will do my best; and if, after all, that best prove good for nothing, I will even send the notes, worthless as they are, that I have made already; a measure very disagreeable to myself, and to which nothing but necessity shall compel me. I shall rejoice to see those new samples of your biography, which you give me to expect.

Allons! Courage!—Here comes something however; produced after a gestation as long as that of a pregnant woman. It is the debt long unpaid; the compliment due to Romney, and if it has your approbation, I will send it, or you may send it for me. I must premise however, that I intended nothing less than a sonnet when I began. I know not why, but I said to myself, it shall not be a sonnet; accordingly I attempted it one sort of measure, then in a second, then in a third, till I had made the trial in half a dozen different kinds of shorter verse, and be-

old it is a sonnet at last. The fates would have so.

TO

GEORGE ROMNEY, Esqr.

Romney! expert infallibly to trace,
On chart or canvas, not the form alone,
And semblance, but, however faintly shewn,
The mind's impression too on every face,
With strokes, that time ought never to erase:
Thou hast so pencil'd mine, that though I own
The subject worthless, I have never known
The artist shining with superior grace.

But this I mark, that symptoms none of woe
In thy incomparable work appear:
Well! I am satisfied, it should be so,
Since, on maturer thought, the cause is clear;

For in my looks what sorrow could'st thou see,
While I was Hayley's guest, and sat to thee?

W. C.

LETTER XII.

To SAMUEL ROSE, Esqr.

Weston, Nov. 9. 1792.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I wish that I were as industrious, and as much occupied as you, though in a different way; but it is not so with me. Mrs. Unwin's great debility (who is not yet able to move without assistance) is of itself a hindrance such as would effectually disable me. Till she can work and read, and fill up her time as usual (all which is at present entirely out of her power) I may now and then find time to write a letter, but I shall write nothing more. I cannot sit with my pen in my hand, and my books before me, while she is in effect in solitude, silent, and looking at the fire. To this hindrance that other has been added, of which you are already aware, a want of spirits, such as I have never known, when I was not absolutely laid by, since I commenced an author. How long I shall be continued in these uncomfortable circumstances is known only to Him, who, as he will, disposes of us all. I may be yet able perhaps, to prepare the first book of the Para-

dise Lost for the press, before it will be wanted; and Johnson himself seems to think there will be no haste for the second. But poetry is my favourite employment, and all my poetical operations are in the mean time suspended, for while a work to which I have bound myself, remains unaccomplished, I can do nothing else.

Johnson's plan of prefixing my phiz to the new edition of my Poems, is by no means a pleasant one to me, and so I told him in a letter I sent him from Eartham, in which I assured him that my objections to it would not be easily surmounted. But if you judge that it may really have an effect in advancing the sale, I would not be so squeamish as to suffer the spirit of prudery to prevail in me to his disadvantage. Somebody told an author, I forget whom, that there was more vanity in refusing his picture, then in granting it, on which he instantly complied. I do not perfectly feel all the force of the argument, but it shall content me that he did,

I do most sincerely rejoice in the success of your publication, and have no doubt that my prophecy concerning your success in greater matters will be fulfilled. We are naturally pleased when our friends approve what we approve ourselves; how

much then must I be pleased, when you speak so kindly of Johnny! I know him to be all that you think him, and love him entirely.

Adieu! We expect you at Christmas, and shall therefore rejoice when Christmas comes. Let nothing interfere.

Ever yours,

W. C.

LETTER XIII.

To JOHN JOHNSON, Esqr.

Weston, Nov. 20, 1792.

MY DEAREST JOHNNY,

I give you many thanks for your rhymes, and your verses without rhyme; for your poetical dialogue between wood and stone; between Homer's head, and the head of Samuel; kindly intended, I know well, for my amusement, and that amused me much.

The successor of the clerk defunct, for whom I used to write, arrived here this morning, with a recommendatory Letter from Joe Rye, and an humble

petition of his own, entreating me to assist him as I had assisted his predecessor. I have undertaken the service, although with no little reluctance, being involved in many arrears on other subjects, and having very little dependence at present on my ability to write at all. I proceed exactly as when you were here—a letter now and then before breakfast, and the rest of my time all holiday; if holiday it may be called, that is spent chiefly in moping and musing, and *"forecasting the fashion of uncertain evils."*

The fever on my spirits has harrassed me much, and I have never had so good a night, nor so quiet a rising, since you went, as on this very morning. A relief that I account particularly seasonable and propitious, because I had, in my intentions, devoted this morning to you, and could not have fulfilled those intentions, had I been as spiritless as I generally am.

I am glad that Johnson is in no haste for Milton, for I seem myself not likely to address myself presently to that concern, with any prospect of success; yet something now and then, like a secret whisper, assures and encourages me that it will yet be done

W. C.

LETTER XIV.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Nov. 25, 1792.

How shall I thank you enough for the interest you take in my future Miltonic labours, and the assistance you promise me in the performance of them; I will sometime or other, if I live, and live a poet, acknowledge your friendship in some of my best verse; the most suitable return one poet can make to another; in the mean time, I love you, and am sensible of all your kindness. You wish me warm in my work, and I ardently wish the same: bnt when I shall be so, God only knows. My melancholy, which seemed a little alleviated for a few days, has gathered about me again, with as black a cloud as ever; the consequence is absolute incapacity to begin.

I was for some years dirge-writer to the town of Northampton, being employed by the clerk of the principal parish there, to furnish him with an annual copy of verses proper to be printed at the foot of his bill of mortality; but the clerk died, and hearing

nothing for two years from his successor, I well hoped that I was out of my office. The other morning however, Sam announced the new clerk; he came to solicit the same service as I had rendered his predecessor, and I reluctantly complied; doubtful indeed, whether I was capable. I have however achieved that labour, and I have done nothing more. I am just sent for up to Mary, dear Mary! Adieu! she is as well as when I left you, I would I could say better. Remember us both affectionately to your sweet boy, and trust me for being

Most truly yours,

W. C.

LETTER XV.

To JOSEPH HILL, Esqr.

Weston, Dec. 16, 1792.

MY DEAR SIR,

We differ so little, that it is pity we should not agree. The possibility of restoring our diseased government is, I think, the only

point on which we are not of one mind. If you are right, and it cannot be touched in the medical way, without danger of absolute ruin to the constitution, keep the doctors at a distance say I—and let us live as long as we can. But perhaps physicians might be found of skill sufficient for the purpose, were they but as willing as able. Who are they? Not those honest blunderers the mob, but our governors themselves. As it is in the power of any individual to be honest if he will, any body of men are, as it seems to me, equally possessed of the same option. For I can never persuade myself to think, the world so constituted by the author of it, and human society, which is his ordinance, so shabby a business, that the buying and selling of votes and consciences should be essential to its existence. As to multiplied representation I know not that I foresee any great advantage likely to arise from that. Provided there be but a reasonable number of reasonable heads laid together for the good of the nation, the end may as well be answered by five hundred, as it would be by a thousand, and perhaps better. But then they should be honest as as well as wise, and in order that they may be so, they should put it out of their own power to be otherwise. This they might certainly do if they would, and would

they do it, I am not convinced that any great mischief would ensue, You say, "somebody must have influence," but I see no necessity for it. Let integrity of intention, and a due share of ability be supposed, and the influence will be in the right place, it will all centre in the zeal and good of the nation. That will influence their debates and decisions, and nothing else ought to do it. You will say perhaps, that wise men, and honest men, as they are supposed, they are yet liable to be split into almost as many differences of opinion as there are individuals; but I rather think not. It is observed of Prince Eugene, and the Duke of Marlborough, that each always approved, and seconded, the plans and views of the other; and the reason given for it, is, that they were men of equal ability. The same cause, that could make two unanimous, would make twenty so, and would at least secure a majority among as many hundreds.

As to the reformation of the church, I want none, unless by a better provision for the inferior clergy; and if that could be brought about by emaciating a little some of our too corpulent dignitaries, I should be well contented.

The Dissenters, I think, Catholics and others, have all a right to the privileges of all other Englishmen, because to deprive them, is persecution, and persecution on any account, but especially on a religious one, is an abomination. But after all, *valeat respublica*, I love my country, I love my king, and I wish peace and prosperity to Old England.

Adieu,

W. C.

LETTER XVI.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Dec. 26, 1792.

That I may not be silent, till my silence alarms you, I snatch a moment to tell you, that although *toujours triste* I am not worse than usual, but my opportunities of writing are *paucified*, as perhaps Dr. Johnson would have dared to say, and the few that I have are shortened by company.

Give my love to dear Tom, and thank him for

his very apposite extract, which I should be happy indeed to turn to any account. How often do I wish in the course of every day, that I could be employed once more in poetry, and how often of course that this Miltonic trap had never caught me! The year ninety-two shall stand chronicled in my remembrance as the most melancholy that I have ever known, except the few weeks that I spent at Eartham; and such it has been principally, because being engaged to Milton, I felt myself no longer free for any other engagement. That ill-fated work, impracticable in itself, has made every thing else impracticable.

* * * I am very Pindaric, and obliged to be so by the hurry of the hour. My friends are come down to breakfast.

Adieu!

W. C.

LETTER XVII.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Jan. 20, 1793.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Now I know that you are safe, I treat you, as you see, with a philosophical indifference, not acknowledging your kind and immediate answer to anxious enquiries, till it suits my own convenience. I have learned however from my late solicitude, that not only you, but yours, interest me to a degree, that should any thing happen to either of you, would be very inconsistent with my peace. Sometimes I thought that you were extremely ill, and once or twice, that you were dead. As often some tragedy reached my ear concerning little Tom, "Oh, *vanæ mentes hominum!*" How liable are we to a thousand impositions, and how indebted to honest old Time, who never fails to undeceive us! Whatever you had in prospect you acted kindly by me not to make me partaker of your expectations, for I have a spirit, if not so sanguine as yours, yet that would have waited for your coming with anxious impatience, and have been dismally mortified by

the disappointment. Had you come, and come without notice too, you would not have surprized us more, than (as the matter was managed) we were surprized at the arrival of your picture. It reached us in the evening, after the shutters were closed, at a time when a chaise might actually have brought you without giving us the least previous intimation. Then it was, that Samuel, with his chearful countenance appeared at the study door, and with a voice as chearful as his looks, exclaimed, " Mr. Hayley is come Madam !" We both started, and in the same moment cried, " Mr. Hayley come ! And where is he ?" The next moment corrected our mistake, and finding Mary's voice grow suddenly tremulous, I turned and saw her weeping.

I do nothing, notwithstanding all your exhortations: my idleness is proof against them all, or to speak more truly my difficulties are so. Something indeed I do. I play at push-pin with Homer every morning before breakfast, fingering and polishing, as Paris did his armour. I have lately had a Letter from Dublin on that subject, which has pleased me.

W C.

LETTER XVIII.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Jan. 29, 1793.

MY DEAREST HAYLEY,

I truly sympathize with you under your weight of sorrow for the loss of our good Samaritan. But be not broken-hearted my friend! Remember the loss of those we love is the condition on which we live ourselves; and that he who chuses his friends wisely from among the excellent of the earth, has a sure ground to hope concerning them when they die, that a merciful God has made them far happier than they could be here, and that we shall join them soon again. This is solid comfort, could we but avail ourselves of it; but I confess the difficulty of doing so. Sorrow is like the deaf adder, "that hears not the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely;" and I feel so much myself for the death of Austen, that my own chief consolation is, that I had never seen him. Live yourself, I beseech you, for I have seen so much of you, that I can by no means spare you, and I will live as long as it shall please God to permit. I know you set some value on me, therefore

let that promise comfort you, and give us not reason to say, like David's servants—" We know that it would have pleased thee more if all we had died, than this one, for whom thou art inconsolable." You have still Romney, and Carwardine, and Guy, and me, my poor Mary, and I know not how many beside; as many, I suppose, as ever had an opportunity of spending a day with you. He who has the most friends, must necessarily lose the most, and he whose friends are numerous as yours, may the better spare a part of them. It is a changing, transient scene: Yet a little while, and this poor dream of life will be over with all of us——The living, and they who live unhappy, they are indeed subjects of sorrow.

Adieu! my beloved friend.

Ever yours,

W. C.

LETTER XIX.

To SAMUEL ROSE, Esqr.

Weston, Feb. 5, 1793.

In this last revisal of my work (the Homer) I have made a number of small improvements, and am now more convinced than ever, having exercised a cooler judgment upon it, than before I could, that the translation will make its way. There must be time for the conquest of vehement and long-rooted prejudice; but without much self-partiality, I believe, that the conquest will be made; and am certain, that I should be of the same opinon, were the work another man's. I shall soon have finished the Odyssey, and when I have, will send the corrected copy of both to Johnson.

Adieu!

W. C.

LETTER XX.

To Lady HESKETH.

Feb. 10, 1793.

My pens are all split, and my ink-glass is dry;
Neither wit, common-sense, nor ideas have I.

In vain has it been, that I have made several attempts to write, since I came from Sussex; unless more comfortable days arrive than I have confidence to look for, there is an end of all writing with me. I have no spirits:—when Rose came, I was obliged to prepare for his coming by a nightly dose of laudanum—twelve drops suffice; but without them, I am devoured by melancholy.

A propos of the Rose! His wife in her political notions is the exact counterpart of yourself—loyal in the extreme. Therefore, if you find her thus inclined, when you become acquainted with her, you must not place her resemblance of yourself to the account of her admiration of you, for she is your likeness ready made. In fact, we are all of one

mind, about government matters, and notwithstanding your opinion, the Rose is himself a Whig, and I am a Whig, and you, my dear, are a Tory, and all the Tories now-a-days call all the Whigs Republicans. How the deuce you came to be a Tory is best known to yourself: you have to answer for this novelty to the shades of your ancestors who were always Whigs ever since we had any.

Adieu.

W. C.

LETTER XXI.

To SAMUEL ROSE, Esqr.

Feb. 17, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have read the critique of my work in the Analytical Review, and am happy to have fallen into the hands of a critic, rigorous enough indeed, but a scholar, and a man of sense, and who does not deliberately intend me mischief. I am better pleased indeed that he censures some things, than

I should have been with unmixt commendation, for his censure (to use the new diplomatic term) will accredit his praises. In his particular remarks he is for the most part right, and I shall be the better for them; but in his general ones I think he asserts too largely, and more than he could prove. With respect to inversions in particular, I know that they do not abound. Once they did, and I had Milton's example for it, not disapproved by Addison. But on ———'s remonstrance against them, I expunged the most, and in my new edition shall have fewer still. I know that they give dignity, and am sorry to part with them, but to parody an old proverb, he who lives in the year ninety-three, must do as in the year ninety-three is done by others. The same remark I have to make on his censure of inharmonious lines. I know them to be much fewer than he asserts, and not more in number than I accounted indispensably necessary to a due variation of cadence. I have however now in conformity with modern taste (over much delicate in my mind) given to a far greater number of them a flow as smooth as oil. A few I retain, and will, in compliment to my own judgment. He thinks me too faithful to compouud epithets in the introductory lines, and I know his reason;

He fears lest the English reader should blame Homer whom he idolizes, though hardly more than I, for such constant repetition. But them I shall not alter. They are necessary to a just representation of the original. In the affair of Outis, I shall throw him flat on his back by an unanswerable argument, which I shall give in a note, and with which I am furnished by Mrs. Unwin. So much for hypercriticism, which has run away with all my paper. This critic by the way is——, I know him by infallible indications.

W. C.

LETTER XXII.

To the Revd. Mr. HURDIS.

Weston, Feb. 22, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

My eyes, which have long been inflamed, will hardly serve for Homer, and oblige me to make all my letters short. You have obliged me much, by sending me so speedily the remainder of your notes. I have begun with them again, and find them, as before, very much to the purpose. More to the purpose they could not have been, had you been poetry professor already. I rejoice sincerely in

the prospect you have of that office, which, whatever may be your own thoughts of the matter, I am sure you will fill with great sufficiency. Would that my interest and power to serve you were greater. One string to my bow I have, and one only, which shall not be idle for want of my exertions. I thank you likewise for your very entertaining notices and remarks in the natural way. The hurry in which I write would not suffer me to send you many in return, had I many to send, but only two or three present themselves.

Frogs will feed on worms. I saw a frog gathering into his gullet an earth worm as long as himself; it cost him time and labour, but at last he succeeded.

Mrs. Unwin and I crossing a brook, saw from the foot-bridge somewhat at the bottom of the water which had the appearance of a flower. Observing it attentively, we found that it consisted of a circular assemblage of minnows; their heads all met in a centre, and their tails diverging at equal distances, and being elevated above their heads, gave them the appearance of a flower half blown. One was longer than the rest, and as often as a straggler came in sight, he quitted his place to pursue him, and having

driven him away, he returned to it again, no other minnow offering to take it in his absence. This we saw him do several times. The object that had attached them all, was a dead minnow, which they seemed to be devouring.

After a very rainy day, I saw on one of the flower borders, what seemed a long hair, but it had a waving, twining motion. Considering more nearly, I found it alive, and endued with spontaneity, but could not discover at the ends of it either head or tail, or any distinction of parts. I carried it into the house, when the air of a warm room dried and killed it presently.

W. C.

LETTER XXIII.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Feb. 24, 1793.

Your Letter (so full of kindness, and so exactly in unison with my own feelings for you) should have had, as it deserved to have, an

earlier answer, had I not been perpetually tormented with inflamed eyes, which are a sad hindrance to me in every thing. But to make amends, if I do not send you an early answer, I send you at least a speedy one, being obliged to write as fast as my pen can trot, that I may shorten the time of poring upon paper as much as possible. Homer too has been another hindrance, for always when I can see, which is only about two hours every morning, and not at all by candle-light, I devote myself to him, being in haste to send him a second time to the press, that nothing may stand in the way of Milton. By the way, where are my dear Tom's remarks, which I long to have, and must have soon, or they will come too late?

Oh you rogue! what would you give to have such a dream about Milton, as I had about a week since? I dreamed that being in a house in the city, and with much company, looking towards the lower end of the room from the upper end of it, I descried a figure which I immediately knew to be Milton's. He was very gravely, but very neatly attired in the fashion of his day, and had a countenance, which filled me with those feelings that an affectionate child has for a beloved father, such, for instance, as Tom has for you.

My first thought was wonder, where he could have been concealed so many years; my second, a transport of joy to find him still alive; my third, another transport to find myself in his company. and my fourth, a resolution to accost him: I did so, and he received me with a complacence, in which I saw equal sweetness and dignity. I spoke of his Paradise Lost, as every man must, who is worthy to speak of it at all, and told him a long story of the manner in which it affected me, when I first discovered it, being at that time a school-boy. He answered me by a smile, and a gentle inclination of his head. He then grasped my hand affectionately, and with a smile that charmed me, said, "well, you for your part will do well also;" at last recollecting his great age (for I understood him to be two hundred years old) I feared that I might fatigue him by much talking, I took my leave, and he took his, with an air of the most perfect good-breeding. His person, his features, his manner, were all so perfectly characteristic, that I am persuaded an apparition of him could not represent him more completely. This may be said to have been one of the dreams of Pindus, may it not?

How truly I rejoice that you have recovered Guy; that man won my heart the moment I saw him;

give my love to him, and tell him I am truly glad he is alive again.

There is much sweetness in those lines from the sonneteer of Avon, and not a little in dear Tom's; an earnest, I trust, of good things to come!

With Mary's kind love, I must now conclude myself,

My dear Brother,

Ever yours,

LIPPUS.

LETTER XXIV.

To the Revd. WALTER BAGOT.

Weston, March 4, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Since I received your last I have been much indisposed, very blind, and very busy. But I have not suffered all these evils at one and the same time. While the winter lasted I was miserable with a fever on my spirits; when the

spring began to approach I was seized with an inflammation in my eyes, and ever since I have been able to use them, have been employed in giving more last touches to Homer, who is on the point of going to the press again.

Though you are Tory I believe, and I am Whig, our sentiments concerning the mad-caps of France are much the same. They are a terrible race, and I have a horror both of them and their principles. Tacitus is certainly living now, and the quotations you sent me can be nothing but extracts from some letters of his to yourself.

Yours most sincerely,

W. C.

LETTER XXV.

To Mr. THOMAS HAYLEY,

Weston, March 14, 1793.

MY DEAR LITTLE CRITIC,

I thank you heartily for your observations, on which I set an higher value, because they have instructed me as much, and

have entertained me more, than all the other strictures of our public judges in these matters. Perhaps I am not much more pleased with *shameless wolfe, &c.* than you. But what is to be done, my little man? Coarse as the expressions are, they are no more than equivalent to those of Homer. The invective of the ancients was never tempered with good manners, as your Papa can tell you! and my business, you know, is not to be more polite than my author, but to represent him as closely as I can.

Dishonour'd foul I have wiped away, for the reason you give, which is a very just one, and the present reading is this,

> Who had dared dishonour thus
> The life itself, &c.

Your objection to *kindler of the fires of heaven,* I had the good fortune to anticipate, and expunged the dirty ambiguity some time since, wondering, not a little, that I had ever admitted it.

The fault you find with the two first verses of Nestor's speech, discovers such a degree of just discernment, that but for your papa's assurance to the

contrary, I must have suspected *him* as the author of that remark: much as I should have respected it, if it had been so, I value it I assure you, my little friend, still more as yours. In the new edition the passage will be found thus altered,

> Alas! great sorrow falls on Greece to-day,
> Priam, and Priam's sons, with all in Troy——
> Oh! how will they exult, and in their hearts
> Triumph, once hearing of this broil between
> The prime of Greece, in council, and in arms.

Where the word *reel* suggests to you the idea of a drunken mountain, it performs the service to which I destined it. It is a bold metaphor; but justified by one of the sublimest passages in scripture, compared with the sublimity of which even that of Homer suffers humiliation.

It is God himself who speaking, I think, by the propet Isaiah, says,

> "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard."

With equal boldness in the same scripture, the poetry of which was never equalled, mountains are said to skip, to break out into singing, and the fields to

clap their hands. I intend, therefore, that my Olympus shall be still tipsy.

The accuracy of your last remark, in which you convicted me of a bull delights me. A fig for all critics but you! The blockheads could not find it. It shall stand thus,

First spake Polydamas——

Homer was more upon his guard, than to commit such a blunder, for he says,

ἦρχ' ἀγορεύειν.

And now, my dear little censor, once more accept my thanks. I only regret that your strictures are so few, being just and sensible as they are.

Tell your Papa that he shall hear from me soon; accept mine, and my dear invalide's affectionate remembrances. Ever yours,

W. C.*

* *NOTE BY THE EDITOR.*

This Letter may be regarded as a remarkable proof of the great poet's indulgent sweetness of temper, in favouring the literary talents of a child. A good-natured reader will hardly

54

To WILLIAM COWPER, Esqr.

Eartham, March 4, 1793.

HONORED KING OF BARDS,

Since you deign to demand the observations of an humble and unexperienced servant of yours, on a work of one who is so much his superior (as he is ever ready to serve you with all his might) behold what you demand! but let me desire you not to censure me for my unskilful and perhaps (as they will undoubtedly appear to you) ridiculous observations; but be so kind as to receive them as a mark of respectful affection from

Your obedient servant,

Thomas Hayley.

blame the parental partiality to a dear departed scholar, which induces me to insert in this note, the Letter Cowper answered so kindly---a Letter, that readers accustomed to contemplate the compositions of childhood, may consider, perhaps, as a curiosity, when they are assured, as they are with perfect truth, that every syllable of the Letter, and of the criticisms annexed to it, were the voluntary and uncorrected production of a boy whose age was little more than twelve years.

Book. Line.

I.——184..I cannot reconcile myself to these expressions,
195 " Ah cloth'd with impudence, &c." and
196 " Shameless wolf," and " Face of flint."

I.——508.." Dishonour'd foul," is, in my opinion, an uncleanly expression.

I.——651.." Reel'd," I think makes it appear as if Olympus was drunk.

I.——749.." Kindler of the fires in Heaven," I think makes Jupiter appear too much like a lamp-lighter.

II.——317..These lines are, in my opinion, below the ele-
to 319 vated genius of Mr. Cowper.

XVIII.——300..This appears to me to be rather Irish, since in
to 304 line 300 you say, " No one sat," and in 304, " Polydamas rose."

LETTER XXVI.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, March 19, 1793.

MY DEAR HAYLEY,

I am so busy every morning before breakfast (my only opportunity) strutting and stalking in Homeric stilts, that you ought to account it an instance of marvellous grace and favour, that I condescend to write even to you. Sometimes I am seriously almost crazed with the multiplicity of the matters before me, and the little or no time that I have for them; and sometimes I repose myself after the fatigue of that distraction, on the pillow of despair; a pillow, which has often served me in the time of need, and is become, by frequent use, if not very comfortable, at least convenient! So reposed, I laugh at the world, and say, "Yes, you may gape and expect both Homer and Milton from me, but I'll be hanged if ever you get them.

In Homer you must know I am advanced as far as the fifteenth book of the Iliad, leaving nothing behind me that can reasonably offend the most fastidious; and I design him for public appearance in his

new dress as soon as possible, for a reason which any poet may guess, if he will but thrust his hand into his pocket.

You forbid me to tantalize you with an invitation to Weston, and yet invite me to Eartham!—No! no! there is no such happiness in store for me at present. Had I rambled at all, I was under promise to all my dear Mother's kindred to go to Norfolk, and they are dying to see me: but I have told them that die they must, for I cannot go; and ergo as you will perceive can go no where else.

Thanks for Mazarine's epitaph! it is full of witty paradox, and is written with a force and severity which sufficiently bespeak the author. I account it an inestimable curiosity, and shall be happy when time shall serve, with your aid, to make a good translation of it. But that will be a stubborn business. Adieu! The clock strikes eight; and now for Homer.

W. C.

LETTER XXVII.

To SAMUEL ROSE, Esqr.

Weston, March 27. 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I must send you a line of congratulation on the event of your transaction with Johnson, since you, I know, partake with me in the pleasure I receive from it. Few of my concerns have been so happily concluded. I am now satisfied with my bookseller, as I have substantial cause to be, and account myself in good hands; a circumstance as pleasant to me, as any other part of my business; for I love dearly to be able to confide, with all my heart, in those with whom I am connected, of what kind soever the connection may be.

The question of printing or not printing the alterations, seems difficult to decide. If they are not printed, I shall perhaps disoblige some purchasers of the first edition, and if they are, many others of them, perhaps a great majority, will never care about them. As far as I have gone I have made a fair copy, and when I have finished the whole, will send them to Johnson, together with the interleaved volumes.

He will see in a few minutes what it will be best to do, and by his judgment I shall be determined. The opinion to which I most incline is, that they ought to be printed separately, for they are many of them rather long, here and there a whole speech, or a whole simile, and the verbal and lineal variations are so numerous, that altogether, I apprehend, they will give a new air to the work, and I hope a much improved one.

I forgot to say in the proper place, that some notes, although but very few, I have added already, and may perhaps see here and there, opportunity for a few more. But notes being little wanted, especially by people at all conversant with classical literature, as most readers of Homer are. I am persuaded that were they numerous, they would be deemed an incumbrance. I shall write to Johnson soon, perhaps to-morrow, and then shall say the same thing to him.

In point of health we continue much the same, our united love, and many thanks for your prosperous negociations, attend yourself and whole family, and especially my little namesake.

Adieu,

W. C.

LETTER XXVIII.

To JOHN JOHNSON, Esqr,

Weston, April 11, 1793.

MY DEAREST JOHNNY,

The long muster-roll of my great and small ancestors I signed and dated, and sent up to Mr. Blue-mantle, on Monday, according to your desire. Such a pompous affair, drawn out for my sake, reminds me of the old fable of the mountain in parturition, and a mouse the produce. Rest undisturbed, say I, their lordly, ducal, and royal dust! Had they left me something handsome, I should have respected them more. But perhaps they did not know that such a one as I should have the honour to be numbered among their descendants. Well! I have a little bookseller that makes me some amends for their deficiency. He has made me a present; an act of liberality, which I take every opportunity to blazon, as it well deserves. But you, I suppose, have learned it already from Mr. Rose.

Fear not, my man. You will acquit yourself very well, I dare say, both in standing for your degree, and when you have gained it. A little tremor,

and a little shame-facedness in a stripling, like you, are recommendations rather than otherwise; and so they ought to be, being symptoms of an ingenuous mind, rather unfrequent in this age of brass.

What you say of your determined purpose, with God's help, to take up the Cross, and despise the shame, gives us both real pleasure. In our pedigree is found one, at least, who did it before you. Do you the like; and you will meet him in Heaven, as sure as the Scripture is the word of God.

The quarrel that the world has with evangelic men and doctrines, they would have with a host of angels in the human form. For it is the quarrel of owls with sunshine; of ignorance with divine illumination.

Adieu, my dear Johnny! We shall expect you with earnest desire of your coming, and receive you with much delight.

W. C.

LETTER XXIX.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, April 23, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

Better late than never, and better a little than none at all! Had I been at liberty to consult my inclinations, I would have answered your truly kind and affectionate Letter immediately. But I am the busiest man alive, and when this epistle is dispatched, you will be the only one of my correspondents, to whom I shall not be indebted. While I write this, my poor Mary sits mute; which I cannot well bear, and which, together with want of time to write much, will have a curtailing effect on my epistle.

My only studying time is still given to Homer, not to correction and amendment of him (for that is all over) but to writing notes. Johnson has expressed a wish for some, that the unlearned may be a little illuminated concerning classical story and the mythology of the antients; and his behaviour to me has been so liberal, that I can refuse him nothing.

Poking into the old Greek commentators blinds me. But it is no matter. I am the more like Homer.

Ever yours,

My dearest Hayley,

W. C.

LETTER XXX.

To the Revd. WALTER BAGOT.

Weston, May 4, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

While your sorrow for our common loss was fresh in your mind, I would not write, lest a letter on so distressing a subject should be too painful both to you and me; and now that I seem to have reached a proper time for doing it, the multiplicity of my literary business will hardly afford me leisure. Both you and I have this comfort when deprived of those we love—at our time of life we have every reason to believe that the deprivation cannot be long. Our sun is setting too, and when the hour of rest arrives we shall rejoin your brother, and many

whom we have tenderly loved, our forerunners into a better country.

I will say no more on a theme which it will be better perhaps to treat with brevity; and because the introduction of any other might seem a transition too violent, I will only add that Mrs. Unwin and I are about as well as we at any time have been within the last year.

Truly yours.

W. C.

LETTER XXXI.

To SAMUEL ROSE, Esqr.

May 5, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

My delay to answer your last kind Letter, to which likewise you desired a speedy reply, must have seemed rather difficult to explain on any other supposition than that of illness; but illness has not been the cause, although to say the truth, I cannot boast of having been lately very well. Yet has not this been the cause of my silence, but

your own advice, very proper and earnestly given to me, to proceed in the revisal of Homer. To this it is owing, that instead of giving an hour or two before breakfast to my correspondents, I allot that time entirely to my studies. I have nearly given the last touches to the poetry, and am now busied far more laboriously in writing notes at the request of my honest bookseller, transmitted to me in the first instance by you, and afterward repeated by himself. I am, therefore, deep in the old Scholia, and have advanced to the latter part of Iliad nine, explaining, as I go, such passages as may be difficult to unlearned readers, and such only; for notes of that kind are the notes that Johnson desired. I find it a more laborious task, than the translation was, and shall be heartily glad when it is over; In the mean time all the Letters I receive remain unanswered, or if they receive an answer, it is always a short one. Such this must be. Johnny is here, having flown over London.

Homer, I believe, will make a much more respectable appearance than before. Johnson now thinks it will be right to make a separate impression of the amendments. W. C.

I breakfast every morning on seven or eight pages of the Greek commentators. For so much I am obliged to read in order to select perhaps three or four short notes for the readers of my translation.

Homer is indeed a tie upon me, that must not on any account be broken, till all his demands are satisfied; though I have fancied while the revisal of the Odyssey was at a distance, that it would ask less labour in the finishing, it is not unlikely, that, when I take it actually in hand, I may find myself mistaken. Of this at least I am sure, that uneven verse abounds much more in it than it once did in the Iliad, yet to the latter the critics objected on that account, though to the former never; perhaps because they had not read it. Hereafter they shall not quarrel with me on that score. The Iliad is now all smooth turnpike, and I will take equal care, that there shall be no jolts in the Odyssey.

LETTER XXXII.

To Lady HESKETH.

The Lodge, May 7, 1793.

MY DEAREST COZ.

You have thought me long silent, and so have many others. In fact I have not for many months written punctually to any but yourself, and Hayley. My time, the little I have, is so engrossed by Homer, that I have at this moment a bundle of unanswered letters by me, and letters likely to be so. Thou knowest, I dare say, what it is to have a head weary with thinking. Mine is so fatigued by breakfast time, three days out of four, I am utterly incapable of sitting down to my desk again for any purpose whatever.

I am glad I have convinced thee at last that thou art a Tory. Your friend's definition of Whig and Tory may be just for aught I know, as far as the latter are concerned; but respecting the former, I think him mistaken. There is no TRUE Whig who wishes all power in the hands of his own party. The division of it, which the lawyers call tripartite, is ex-

actly what he desires; and he would have neither king, lords, nor commons unequally trusted, or in the smallest degree predominant. Such a Whig am I, and such Whigs are the true friends of the constitution.

Adieu! my dear, I am dead with weariness.

W. C.

LETTER XXXIII.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

May 21, 1793.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You must either think me extremely idle, or extremely busy, that I have made your last very kind Letter wait so very long for an answer. The truth however is, that I am neither; but have had time enough to have scribbled to you, had I been able to scribble at all. To explain this riddle I must give you a short account of my proceedings.

I rise at six every morning, and fag till near

eleven, when I breakfast. The consequence is, that I am so exhausted as not to be able to write, when the opportunity offers. You will say—" breakfast before you work, and then your work will not fatigue you. I answer—" perhaps I might, and your counsel would probably prove beneficial; but I cannot spare a moment for eating in the early part of the morning, having no other time for study." This uneasiness of which I complain, is a proof that I am somewhat stricken in years; and there is no other cause by which I can account for it, since I go early to bed, always between ten and eleven, and seldom fail to sleep well. Certain it is, ten years I could have done as much, and sixteen years ago did actually much more, without suffering fatigue, or any inconvenience from my labours. How insensibly old age steals on, and how often is it actually arrived before we suspect it! Accident alone; some occurrence that suggests a comparison of our former with our present selves, affords the discovery. Well! It is always good to be undeceived, especially on an article of such importance.

There has been a book lately published, entitled, *Man as he is.* I have heard a high character of it, as admirably written, and am informed, that for

that reason, and because it inculcates Whig-principles, it is by many imputed to you. I contradict this report, assuring my informant, that had it been yours, I must have known it, for that you have bound yourself to make me your father-confessor on all such wicked occasions, and not to conceal from me even a murder, should you happen to commit one.

I will not trouble you, at present, to send me any more books with a view to my notes on Homer. I am not without hopes, that Sir John Throckmorton, who is expected here from Venice in a short time, may bring me Villoison's edition of the Odyssey. He certainly will, if he found it published, and that alone will be *instar omnium.*

Adieu, my dearest brother! Give my love to Tom, and thank him for his book, of which I believe I need not have deprived him, intending, that my readers shall detect the occult instruction contained in Homer's stories for themselves.

W. C.

LETTER XXXIV.

To Lady HESKETH.

Weston, June 1, 1793.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,

You will not (you say) come to us now; and you tell us not when you will. These assignations *sine die* are such shadowy things, that I can neither grasp nor get any comfort from them. Know you not, that hope is the next best thing to enjoyment? Give us then a hope, and a determinate time for that hope to fix on; and we will endeavour to be satisfied.

Johnny is gone to Cambridge, called thither to take his degree, and is much missed by me. He is such an active little fellow in my service, thot he cannot be otherwise. In three weeks, however, I shall hope to have him again for a fortnight. I have had a Letter from him, containing an incident, which has given birth to the following.

TO

A YOUNG FRIEND,

On his arrival at Cambridge wet,

WHEN NO RAIN HAD FALLEN THERE.

If Gideon's fleece, which drench'd with dew he found,
While moisture none refreshed the herbs around,
Might fitly represent the Church, endow'd
With heavenly gifts, to Heathens not allow'd;
In pledge, perhaps, of favours from on high,
Thy locks were wet, when other locks were dry.
Heav'n grant us half the omen! may we see,
Not drought on others, but much dew on thee!

These are spick and span. Johnny himself has not yet seen them, By the way, he has filled your book completely; and I will give thee a guinea if thou wilt search thy old book for a couple of songs, and two or three other pieces of which I know thou madest copies at the vicarage, and which I have lost. The songs I know are pretty good, and I would fain recover them.

W. C.

LETTER XXXV.

To the Revd. Mr. HURDIS.

Weston, June 6, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

I seize a passing moment merely to say that I feel for your distresses, and sincerely pity you, and I shall be happy to learn from your next, that your Sister's amendment has superseded the necessity you feared of a journey to London. Your candid account of the effect that your afflictions have both on your spirits and temper, I can perfectly understand, having laboured much in that fire myself, and perhaps more than any man. It is in such a school, however, that we must learn, if we ever truly learn it, the natural depravity of the human heart, and of our own in particular; together with the consequence that necessarily follows such wretched premises; our indispensable need of the atonement, and our inexpressible obligations to him who made it. This reflection cannot escape a thinking mind, looking back on those ebullitions of fretfulness and impatience, to which it has yielded in a season of great affliction.

Having lately had company who left us only on the fourth, I have done nothing, nothing indeed, since my return from Sussex, except a trifle or two, which it was incumbent upon me to write. Milton hangs in doubt, neither spirits nor opportunity suffice me for that labour. I regret continually that I ever suffered myself to be persuaded to undertake it. The most that I hope to effect is a complete revisal of my own Homer. Johnson told my friend, who has just left me, that it will begin to be reviewed in the next Analytical, and he *hoped* the review of it would not offend me. By this I understand, that if I am not offended, it will be owing more to my own equanimity than to the mildness of the critic. So be it! He will put an opportunity of victory over myself into my hands, and I will endeavour not to lose it.

Adieu!

W. C.

LETTER XXXVI.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, June 29, 1793.

Dear architect of fine CHATEAUX in air,
Worthier to stand for ever if they could,
Than any built of stone, or yet of wood,
For back of royal elephant to bear!

Oh for permission from the skies to share,
Much to my own, though little to thy good,
With thee (not subject to the jealous mood!)
A partnership of literary ware!

But I am bankrupt now; and doom'd henceforth
To drudge in descant dry, on others lays;
Bards, I acknowledge, of unequall'd worth!
But what is commentator's happiest praise?

That he has furnish'd lights for other eyes,
Which they who need them use, and then despise.

What remains for me to say on this subject, my dear brother bard, I will say in prose. There are other impediments which I could not comprize within the bounds of a sonnet.

My poor Mary's infirm condition makes it impossible for me, at present, to engage in a work such as you propose. My thoughts are not sufficiently free, nor have I, or can I, by any means, find opportunity; added to it comes a difficulty which, though you are not at all aware of it, presents itself to me under a most forbidding appearance: Can you guess it? No, not you; neither perhaps will you be able to imagine that such a difficulty can possibly subsist. If your hair begins to bristle, stroke it down again, for there is no need why it should erect itself. It concerns me, not you. I know myself too well not to know that I am nobody in verse, unless in a corner, and alone, and unconnected in my operations. This is not owing to want of love for you, my Brother, or the most consummate confidence in you; for I have both in a degree that has not been exceeded in the experience of any friend you have, or ever had. But I am so made up---I will not enter into a metaphysical analysis of my strange composition, in order to detect the true cause of this evil; but on a general view of the matter, I suspect that it proceeds from that shyness which has been my effectual and almost fatal hindrance on many other important occasions, and which I should feel, I well know, on this, to a

degree that would perfectly cripple me. No! I shall neither do, nor attempt any thing of consequence more, unless my poor Mary get better; nor even then, unless it should please God to give me another nature, in concert with any man—I could not, even with my own father or brother, were they now alive. Small game must serve me at present, and till I have done with Homer and Milton, a sonnet, or some such matter, must content me. The utmost that I aspire to, and Heaven knows with how feeble a hope, is to write at some better opportunity, and when my hands are free, *The four Ages*. Thus I have opened my heart unto thee.

W. C.

LETTER XXXVII.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Jul 7, 1793.

MY DEAREST HAYLEY,

If the excessive heat of this day, which forbids me to do any thing else, will

permit me to scribble to you, I shall rejoice. To do this is a pleasure to me at all times, but to do it now, a do[illegible] because I am in haste to tell you how much delighted with your projected quadruple alliance, and to assure you, that if it please God to afford me health, spirits, ability, and leisure, I will not fail to devote them all to the production of my quota of *The four Ages.*

You are very kind to humour me as you do, and had need be a little touched yourself with all my oddities, that you may know how to administer to mine. All whom I love do so, and I believe it to be impossible to love heartily those who do not. People must not do me good in *their* way, but in my *own*, and then they do me good indeed. My pride, my ambition, and my friendship for you, and the interest I take in my own dear self, will all be consulted and gratified by an arm-in-arm appearance with you in public; and I shall work with more zeal and assiduity at Homer, and when Homer is finished at Milton, with the prospect of such a coalition before me. But what shall I do with a multitude of small pieces, from which I intended to select the best, and adding them to *The four Ages*, to have made a volume? Will there be room for them upon your plan? I have re-touched

them, and will re-touch them again. Some of them will suggest pretty devices to a designer, and in short, I have a desire not to lose them.

I am at this moment, with all the industry natural to poets, expending nobody knows what, in embellishing my premises, or rather the premises of my neighbour Courtenay, which is more poetical still. I have built one summer-house already, with the boards of my old study, and am building another spick and span as they say. I have also a stone-cutter now at work, setting a bust of my dear old Grecian on a pedestal; and beside all this, I meditate still more that is to be done in the autumn. Your project therefore is most opportune, as any project must needs be that has so direct a tendency to put money into the pocket of one so likely to want it.

> Ah brother poet! send me of your shade,
> And bid the Zephyrs hasten to my aid!
> Or, like a worm unearth'd at noon, I go
> Dispatch'd by sunshine, to the shades below.

My poor Mary is as well as the heat will allow her to be, and whether it be cold or sultry, is always affectionately mindful of you, and yours.

W. C.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To the Revd. Mr. GREATHEED.

July 27, 1793.

I was not without some expectation of a line from you my dear Sir, though you did not promise me one at your departure; and am happy not to have been disappointed; still happier to learn that you and Mrs. Greatheed are well, and so delightfully situated. Your kind offer to us of sharing with you the house which you at present inhabit, added to the short, but lively, description of the scenery that surrounds it, wants nothing to win our acceptance, should it please God to give Mrs. Unwin a little more strength, and should I ever be master of my time so as to be able to gratify myself with what would please me most. But many have claims upon us, and some who cannot absolutely be said to have any, would yet complain, and think themselves slighted, should we prefer rocks and caves to them. In short we are called so many ways, that these numerous demands are likely to operate as a *remora*, and to keep us fixt at home. Here we can occasionally

have the pleasure of yours, and Mrs. Greatheed's company, and to have it here must I believe content us. Hayley in his last letter gives me reason to expect the pleasure of seeing him and his dear boy Tom, in the autumn. He will use all his eloquence to draw us to Eartham again. My Cousin Johnny of Norfolk holds me under promise to make my first trip thither, and the very same promise I have hastily made to visit Sir John and Lady Throckmorton, at Bucklands. How to reconcile such clashing promises. and give satisfaction to all, would puzzle me, had I nothing else to do; and therefore, as I say, the result will probably be, that we shall find ourselves obliged to go no where, since we cannot every where.

* * * *

Wishing you both safe at home again, and to see you as soon as may be, here.

I remain,

Affectionately yours,

W. C.

LETTER XXXIX.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, July 24, 1793.

I have been vexed with myself, my dearest brother, and with every thing about me, not excepting even Homer himself, that I have been obliged so long to delay an answer to your last kind letter. If I listen any longer to calls another way, I shall hardly be able to tell you, how happy we are in the hope of seeing you in the autumn, before the autumn will have arrived. Thrice welcome will you, and your dear boy, be to us, and the longer you will afford us your company, the more welcome. I have set up the head of Homer on a famous fine pedestal, and a very majestic appearance he makes. I am now puzzled about a motto, and wish you to decide for me between two, one of which I have composed myself, a Greek one as follows:

Εικονα τις ταυτην; κλυτον ανερος ωνομ' ολωλεν.
Ουνομα δ' ετος ανηρ αφθιτον αιεν εχει.

The other is my own translation of a passage in the Odyssey, the original of which I have seen used as a motto to an engraved head of Homer many a time.

The present edition of the lines stands thus,

Him partially the muse,
And dearly loved, yet gave him good and ill:
She quenched his sight, but gave him strains divine.

Tell me by the way (if you ever had any speculations on the subject) what is it you suppose Homer to have meant in particular, when he ascribed his blindness to the muse, for that he speaks of himself under the name of Demodocus in the eighth book, I believe, is by all admitted. How could the old bard study himself blind, when books where either so few, or none at all? And did he write his poems? If neither were the cause, as seems reasonable to imagine, how could he incur his blindness by such means as could be justly imputable to the muse? Would mere thinking blind him? I want to know:

"Call up some spirit from the vasty deep!"

I said to my Sam*——" Sam, build me a shed " in the garden, with any thing that you can find, and " make it rude and rough like one of those at Eartham." —— " Yes, Sir," says Sam, and straitway laying his own noddle, and the carpenter's noddle together, has built me a thing fit for Stow Gardens. Is not this vexatious?——I threaten to inscribe it thus.

Beware of building? I intended
Rough logs and thatch, and thus it ended.

But my Mary says, I shall break Sam's heart, and the carpenter's too, and will not consent to it. Poor Mary sleeps but ill. How have you lived who cannot bear a sun-beam.

Adieu!

My dearest Hayley,

W C.

* A very affectionate, worthy domestic, who attended his master into Sussex.

LETTER XL.

To Lady HESKETH.

Weston, Aug. 11, 1793.

MY DEAREST COUSIN,

I am glad that my poor and hasty attempts to express some little civility to Miss Fanshaw, and the amiable Count, have your and her approbation. The lines addressed to her were not what I would have made them, but lack of time, a lack which always presses me, would not suffer me to improve them. Many thanks for her letter, which, were my merits less the subject of it, I should without scruple say is an excellent one. She writes with the force and accuracy of a person skilled in more languages than are spoken in the present day, as I doubt not that she is. I perfectly approve the theme she recommends to me, but am at present so totally absorbed in Homer, that all I do beside is ill done, being hurried over; and I would not execute ill a subject of her recommending.

I shall watch the walnuts with more attention than they who eat them, which I do in some hope, though you do not expressly say so, that when their threshing-time arrives, we shall see you here. I am

now going to paper my new study, and in a short time it will be fit to inhabit.

Lady Spencer has sent me a present from Rome, by the hands of Sir John Throckmorton, engravings of Odyssey subjects, after figures by Flaxman, a statuary at present resident there, of high repute, and much a friend of Hayley's.

Thou livest, my dear, I acknowledge, in a very fine country, but they have spoiled it by building London it.

Adieu.

W. C.

LETTER XLI.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Aug. 15, 1793.

Instead of a pound or two, spending a mint
Must serve me at least, I believe, with a hint,
That building, and building a man may be driven
At last out of doors, and have no house to live in.

Besides, my dearest brother, they have not only built for me, what I did not want,

but have ruined a notable tetrastic by doing so. I had written one which I designed for a hermitage, and it will by no means suit the fine and pompous affair which they have made instead of one. So that as a poet I am every way afflicted; made poorer than I need have been, and robbed of my verses: what case can be more deplorable?

You must not suppose me ignorant of what Flaxman has done, or that I have not seen it, or that I am not actually in possession of it, at least of the engravings which you mention. In fact, I have had them more than a fortnight. Lady dowager Spencer, to whom I inscribed my Odyssey, and who was at Rome when Sir John Throckmorton was there, charged him with them as a present to me, and arriving here lately he executed his commission. Romney I doubt not is right in his judgment of them; he is an artist himself, and cannot easily be mistaken; and I take his opinion as an oracle, the rather because it coincides exactly with my own. The figures are highly classical, antique, and elegant; especially that of Penelope, who whether she wakes or sleeps must necessarily charm all beholders.

Your scheme of embellishing my Odyssey with these plates is a kind one, and the fruit of your be-

nevolence to me; but Johnson, I fear, will hardly stake so much money as the cost would amount to, on a work, the fate of which is at present uncertain. Nor could we adorn the Odyssey in this splendid manner, unless we had similar ornaments to bestow on the Iliad. Such I presume are not ready, and much time must elapse even if Flaxman should accede to the plan, before he could possibly prepare them. Happy indeed should I be to see a work of mine so nobly accompanied, but should that good fortune ever attend me, it cannot take place till the third or fourth edition shall afford the occasion. This I regret, and I regret too that you will have seen them before I can have an opportunity to shew them to you. Here is six pence for you if you will abstain from the sight of them while you are in London.

> The sculptor?—nameless, though once dear to fame;
> But this man bears an everlasting name.*

So I purpose it shall stand; and on the pedestal when you come, in that form you will find it.

* A translation of Cowper's Greek verses on his bust of Homer

The added line from the Odyssey is charming, but the assumption of sonship to Homer seems too daring; suppose it stood thus,

Ως δε παις φ πατρι, και ποτε λησομαι αυτε.

I am not sure that this would be clear of the same objection, and it departs from the text still more.

With my poor Mary's best love and our united wishes to see you here, I remain,

My dearest brother,

Ever yours,

W. C.

LETTER XLII.

To Mrs. COURTENAY.

Weston, Aug. 20, 1793.

My dearest Catharina is too reasonable, I know, to expect news from me, who live on the out-side of the world, and know nothing that passes within it: The best news is, that though you are gone, you are not gone for ever, as once I supposed you were, and said that we should probably

meet no more. Some news however we have; but then I conclude that you have already received it from the Doctor, and that thought almost deprives me of all courage to relate it. On the evening of the feast, Bob Archer's house affording, I suppose, the best room for the purpose, all the lads and lasses who felt themselves disposed to dance assembled there. Long time they danced, at least long time they did something a little like it, when at last the company having retired, the fiddler asked Bob for a lodging, Bob replied——"that his beds were all "full of his own family, but if he chose it he would "show him a hay-cock, where he might sleep as "sound as in any bed whatever."——So forth they went together, and when they reached the place, the fiddler knocked down Bob, and demanded his money. But happily for Bob, though he might be knocked down, and actually was so, yet he could not possibly be robbed, having nothing. The fiddler, therefore, having amused himself with kicking him and beating him as he lay, as long as he saw good, left him, and has never been heard of since, nor enquired after indeed, being no doubt the last man in the world whom Bob wishes to see again.

By a letter from Hayley, to day, I learn, that

Flaxman, to whom we are indebted for those Odyssey figures which Lady Frog brought over, has almost finished a set for the Iliad also. I should be glad to embellish my Homer with them, but neither my bookseller, nor I, shall probably chuse to risque so expensive an ornament on a work, whose reception with the public is at present doubtful.

Adieu, my dearest Catharina. Give my best love to your husband. Come home as soon as you can, and accept our united very best wishes.

W. C.

LETTER XLIII.

To SAMUEL ROSE, Esqr.

Weston, Aug. 22, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I rejoice that you have had so pleasant an excursion, and have beheld so many beautiful scenes. Except the delightful Upway I have seen them all. I have lived much at Southampton, have slept and caught a sore-throat at Lyndhurst, and have swum in the bay of Weymouth. It will give

us great pleasure to see you here, should your business give you an opportunity to finish your excursions of this season with one to Weston.

As for my going on, it is much as usual. I rise at six; an industrious and wholesome practice from which I have never swerved since March. I breakfast generally about eleven—have given the intermediate time to my old delightful bard. Villoisson no longer keeps me company. I therefore now jog along with Clarke and Barnes at my elbow, and from the excellent annotations of the former select such as I think likely to be useful, or that recommend themselves by the amusement they may afford; of which sorts there are not a few. Barnes also affords me some of both kinds, but not so many, his notes being chiefly paraphrastical or grammatical. My only fear is lest between them both I should make my work too voluminous.

W. C.

LETTER XLIV.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Aug. 27, 1793.

I thank you, my dear brother, for consulting the Gibbonian oracle on the question concerning Homer's muse, and his blindness. I proposed it likewise to my little neighbour Buchanan, who gave me precisely the same answer. I felt an insatiable thirst to learn something new concerning him, and despairing of information from others, was willing to hope, that I had stumbled on matter unnoticed by the commentators, and might perhaps acquire a little intelligence from himself. But the great and the little oracle together have extinguished that hope, and I despair now of making any curious discoveries about him.

Since Flaxman (which I did not know till your letter told me so) has been at work for the Iliad, as well as the Odyssey, it seems a great pity, that the engravings should not be bound up with some Homer or other; and, as I said before, I should have been too proud to have bound them up in mine.

But there is an objection, at least such it seems to me, that threatens to disqualify them for such a use, namely, the shape and size of them, which are such, that no book of the usual form could possibly receive them, save in a folded state, which, I apprehend, would be to murder them.

The monument of Lord Mansfield, for which you say he is engaged, will (I dare say) prove a noble effort of genius. Statuaries, as I have heard an eminent one say, do not much trouble themselves about a likeness: else I would give much to be able to communicate to Flaxman the perfect idea that I have of the subject, such as he was forty years ago. He was at that time wonderfully handsome, and would expound the most mysterious intricacies of the law, or recapitulate both matter and evidence of a cause, as long as from hence to Eartham, with an intelligent smile on his features, that bespoke plainly the perfect ease with which he did it. The most abstruse studies (I believe) never cost him any labour.

You say nothing lately of your intended journey our way: yet the year is waining, and the shorter days give you a hint to lose no time unnecessarily. Lately we had the whole family at the Hall, and now

we have nobody. The Throckmortons are gone into Berkshire, and the Courtenays into Yorkshire, They are so pleasant a family, that I heartily wish you to see them; and at the same time wish to see you before they return, which will not be sooner than October. How shall I reconcile these wishes seemingly opposite? Why, by wishing that you may come soon and stay long. I know no other way of doing it.

My poor Mary is much as usual. I have set up Homer's head, and inscribed the pedestal; my own Greek at the top, with your translation under it, and

Ως δε παις ῳ πατρι, &c.

It makes altogether a very smart and learned appearance.

W. C.

LETTER XLV.

To Lady HESKETH.

August 29, 1793.

Your question, at what time your coming to us will be most agreeable, is a knotty one, and such as, had I the wisdom of Solomon, I should be puzzled to answer, I will therefore leave it still a question, and refer the time of your journey Weston-ward entirely to your own election: adding this one limitation however, that I do not wish to see you exactly at present, on account of the unfinished state of my study, the wainscot of which still smells of paint, and which is not yet papered, But to return: as I have insinuated, thy pleasant company is the thing which I always wish and as much at one time as at another. I believe, if I examine myself minutely, since I despair of ever having it in the height of summer, which for your sake I should desire most, the depth of the winter is the season which would be most eligible to me. For then it is, that in general I have most need of a cordial, and particularly in the month of January. I

am sorry however, that I departed so far from my first purpose, and am answering a question, which I declared myself unable to answer. Chuse thy own time, secure of this, that whatever time that be, it will always to us be a welcome one.

I thank you for your pleasant extract of Miss Fanshaw's letter.

> Her pen drops eloquence as sweet
> As any muse's tongue can speak;
> Nor need a scribe, like her, regret
> Her want of Latin or of Greek.

And now, my dear, adieu! I have done more than I expected, and begin to feel myself exhausted with so much scribbling at the end of four hours close application to study.

W. C.

LETTER XLVI.

To the Revd. Mr. JOHNSON,

Weston, April 11, 1793.

MY DEAREST JOHNNY,

To do a kind thing, and in a kind manner, is a double kindness, and no man is

more addicted to both than you, or more skilful in contriving them. Your plan to surprzie me agreeably succeeded to admiration. It was only the day before yesterday, that, while we walked after dinner in the orchard, Mrs. Unwin between Sam and me, hearing the Hall clock, I observed a great difference between that and ours, and began immediately to lament, as I had often done, that there was not a sun-dial in all Weston to ascertain the true time for us. My complaint was long, and lasted till, having turned into the grass-walk, we reached the new building at the end of it; where we sat awhile and reposed ourselves. In a few minutes we returned by the way we came, when what think you was my astonishment to see what I had not seen before, though I had passed close by it, a smart sun-dial mounted on a smart stone pedestal! I assure you it seemed the effect of conjuration. I stopped short, and exclaimed,—— "Why, here is a sun dial, and upon our ground! "How is this? Tell me, Sam, how it came here? "Do you know any thing about it?" At first I really thought (that is to say, as soon as I could think at all) that this fac-totum of mine, Sam Roberts, having often heard me deplore the want of one, had given orders for the supply of that want himself,

without my knowledge, and was half pleased and half offended. But he soon exculpated himself by imputing the fact to you. It was brought up to Weston (it seems) about noon: but Andrews stopped the cart at the blacksmith's, whence he sent to enquire if I was gone for my walk. As it happened, I walked not till two o'clock. So there it stood waiting till I should go forth, and was introduced before my return. Fortunately too I went out at the church end of the village, and consequently saw nothing of it. How I could possibly pass it without seeing it, when it stood in the walk, I know not, but certain it is that I did. And where I shall fix it now, I know as little. It cannot stand between the two gates, the place of your choice, as I understand from Samuel, because the hay-cart must pass that way in the season. But we are now busy in winding the walk all round the orchard, and in doing so shall doubtless stumble at last upon some open spot, that will suit it.

There it shall stand, while I live, a constant monument of your kindness.

I have this moment finished the twelfth book of the Odyssey; and I read the Iliad to Mrs. Unwin every evening.

The effect of this reading is, that I still spy blemishes, something at least that I can mend; so that after all, the transcript of alterations which you and George have made will not be a perfect one. It would be foolish to forego an opportunity of improvement for such a reason; neither will I. It is ten o'clock, and I must breakfast. Adieu, therefore, my dear Johnny! Remember your appointment to see us in October.

Ever yours,

W. C.

LETTER XLVII.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Sept. 8, 1793.

Non sum quod simulo, my dearest Brother! I am cheerful upon paper sometimes, when I am absolutely the most dejected of all creatures. Desirous however to gain something myself by my own letters, unprofitable as they may and must be to my friends, I keep melancholy out of them as much

as I can, that I may, if possible, by assuming a less gloomy air, deceive myself, and by feigning with a continuance, improve the fiction into reality.

So you have seen Flaxman's figures, which I intended you should not have seen till I had spread them before you. How did you dare to look at them? You should have covered yur eyes with both hands: I am charmed with Flaxman's Penelope, and though you don't deserve that I should, will send you a few lines, such as they are, with which she inspired me the other day while I was taking my noon-day walk.

The suitors sinn'd, but with a fair excuse,
Whom all this elegance might well seduce;
Nor can our censure on the husband fall,
Who, for a wife so lovely, slew them all.

I know not that you will meet any body here, when we see you in October, unless perhaps my Johnny should happen to be with us. If Tom is charmed with the thoughts of coming to Weston, we are equally so with the thoughts of seeing him here. At his years I should hardly hope to make his visit agreeable to him, did I not know that he is of a temper and disposition that must make him happy every

where. Give our love to him. If Romney can come with you, we have both room to receive him, and hearts to make him most welcome.

W. C.

LETTER XLVIII.

To Mrs. COURTENAY.

Sept. 15, 1793.

A thousand thanks, my dearest Catharina, for your pleasant Letter; one of the pleasantest that I have received since your departure. You are very good to apologize for your delay, but I had not flattered myself with the hopes of a speedier answer. Knowing full well your talents for entertaining your friends who are present, I was sure you would with difficulty find half an hour that you could devote to an absent one.

I am glad that you think of your return. Poor Weston is a desolation without you. In the mean time I amuse myself as well as I can, thrumming old Homer's lyre, and turning the premises upside down.

Upside down indeed, for so it is literally that I have been dealing with the orchard, almost ever since you went, digging and delving it around to make a new walk, which now begins to assume the shape of one, and to look as if some time or other it may serve in that capacity. Taking my usual exercise there the other day with Mrs. Unwin, a wide disagreement between your clock and ours, occasioned me to complain much, as I have often done, of the want of a dial. Guess my surprize, when at the close of my complaint I saw one—saw one close at my side; a smart one, glittering in the sun, and mounted on a pedestal of stone. I was astonished. "This," I exclaimed, "is absolute conjuration!"——It was a most mysterious affair, but the mystery was at last explained.

This scribble I presume will find you just arrived at Bucklands. I would with all my heart that since dials can be thus suddenly conjured from one place to another, I could be so too, and could start up before your eyes in the middle of some walk or lawn, where you and Lady Frog are wandering.

While Pitcairne whistles for his family estate in Fifeshire, he will do well if he will sound a few notes for me. I am originally of the same shire, and a fa-

mily of my name is still there, to whom perhaps he may whistle on my behalf, not altogether in vain. So shall his fife excel all my poetical efforts, which have not yet, and I dare say never will, effectually charm one acre of ground into my possession.

Remember me to Sir John, Lady Frog, and your husband—tell them I love them all. She told me once she was jealous, now indeed she seems to have some reason, since to her I have not written, and have written twice to you. But bid her be of good courage, in due time I will give her proof of my constancy.

W. C.

LETTER XLIX.

To the Revd. Mr. JOHNSON.

Weston, Sept. 29, 1793.

MY DEAR JOHNNY,

You have done well to leave off visiting, and being visited. Visits are insatiable devourers of time, and fit only for those, who if they did not that, would do nothing. The worst consequence of such departures faom common practice, is to be

termed a singular sort of a fellow, or an odd fish; a sort of reproach that a man might be wise enough to condemn, who had not half your understanding.

I look forward with pleasure to October the eleventh, the day which I expect will be *Albo notandus lapillo,* on account of your arrival here.

Here you will meet Mr. Rose, who comes on the eighth, and brings with him Mr. Lawrence, the painter, you may guess for what purpose. Lawrence returns when he has made his copy of me, but Mr. Rose will remain perhaps as long as you will. Hayley on the contrary will come, I suppose, just in time not to see you. Him we expect on the twentieth. I trust, however, that thou wilt so order thy pastoral matters, as to make thy stay here as long as possible.

Lady Hesketh, in her last letter, enquires very kindly after you, asks me for your address, and purposes soon to write to you. We hope to see her in November—so that after a summer without company, we are likely to have an autumn and a winter sociable enough.

W. C.

LETTER L.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Oct. 5, 1793.

My good intentions towards you, my dearest Brother, are continually frustrated; and which is most provoking, not by such engagements and avocations as have a right to my attention, such as those to my Mary, and the old bard of Greece, but by mere impertinencies, such as calls of civility from persons not very interesting to me, and letters from a distance still less interesting, because the writers of them are strangers. A man sent me a long copy of verses, which I could do no less than acknowledge. They were silly enough, and cost me eighteen-pence, which was seventeen-pence half-penny farthing more than they were worth. Another sent me at the same time a plan, requesting my opinion of it, and that I would lend him my name as editor, a request with which I shall not comply, but I am obliged to tell him so, and one Letter is all that I have time to dispatch in a day, sometimes half a one, and sometimes I am not able to write at all.

Thus it is that my time perishes, and I can neither give so much of it as I would to you or to any other valuable purpose.

On Tuesday we expect company. Mr. Rose, and Laurence the painter. Yet once more is my patience to be exercised, and once more I am made to wish that my face had been moveable, to put on and take off at pleasure, so as to be portable in a band-box, and sent to the artist. These however will be gone, as I believe I told you, before you arrive, at which time I know not that any body will be here, except my Johnny, whose presence will not at all interfere with our readings—you will not, I believe find me a very slashing critic—I hardly indeed expect to find any thing in your Life of Milton, that I shall sentence to amputation. How should it be too long? A well written work, sensible and spirited, such as yours was, when I saw it, is never so. But however, we shall see. I promise to spare nothing that I think may be lopped off with advantage.

I began this Letter yesterday, but could not finish it till now. I have risen this morning like an infernal frog out of Acheron, covered with the ooze and mud of melancholy. For this reason I am not sorry to find myself at the bottom of my paper, for

had I more room perhaps I might fill it all with croaking, and make an heart-ache at Eartham, which I wish to be always cheerful. Adieu. My poor sympathising Mary is of course sad, but always mindful of you.

W. C.

LETTER LI.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Oct. 18, 1793.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I have not at present much that is necessary to say here, because I shall have the happiness of seeing you so soon; my time, according to custom, is a mere scrap, for which reason such must be my Letter also.

You will find here more than I have hitherto given you reason to expect, but none who will not be happy to see you. These however stay with us but a short time, and will leave us in full possesion of Weston on Wednesday next.

I look forward with joy to your coming, hear-

tily wishing you a pleasant journey, in which my poor Mary joins me. Give our best love to Tom; without whom, after having been taught to look for him, we should feel our pleasure in the interview, much diminished.

Læti expectamus te puerumque tuum.

W. C.

LETTER LII.

To the Revd. J. JEKYLL RYE,

Weston, Nov. 3, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

Sensible as I am of your kindness in taking such a journey, at no very pleasant season, merely to serve a friend of mine, I cannot allow my thanks to sleep till I may have the pleasure of seeing you. I hope never to show myself unmindful of so great a favour. Two lines which I received yesterday from Mr. Hurdis, written hastily on the day of decision, informed me that it was made in his favour, and by a majority of twenty. I have great satisfaction in the event, and consequently hold myself

indebted to all who at my instance have contributed to it.

You may depend on me for due attention to the honest clerk's request. When he called, it was not possible that I should answer your obliging Letter, for he arrived here very early, and if I suffered any thing to interfere with my morning studies I should never accomplish my labours. Your hint concerning the subject for this year's copy, is a very good one, and shall not be neglected.

I remain,

Sincerely yours,

W. C.

My second visit to Weston (a scene that I cannot mention without feeling it endeared to me by the pleasures, and by the pains, of joyous, and of mournful remembrance) took place very soon after the date of the last Letter. I found Cowper apparently well, and enlivened by the society of his young kinsman from Norfolk, and another of his favourite friends,

Mr. Rose. The latter came recently from the seat of Lord Spencer, in Northamptonshire, and commissioned by that accomplished nobleman to invite Cowper, and his guests, to Althorpe, where my friend Gibbon was to make a visit of considerable continuance.

All the guests of Cowper now recommended it to him, very strongly, to venture on this little excursion, to a house whose master he most cordially respected, and whose library alone might be regarded as a magnet of very powerful attraction to every elegant scholar.

I wished to see Cowper and Gibbon personally acquainted, because I perfectly knew the real benevolence of both; for widely as they might differ on one important article, they were both able and worthy to appreciate, and enjoy, the extraordinary mental powers, and the rare colloquial excellence of each other. But the constitutional shyness of the poet conspired with the present infirm state of Mrs. Unwin to prevent their meeting. He sent Mr. Rose and me to make his apology for declining so honourable an invitation. After a visit to Althorpe, where we had nothing to regret but the absence of Cowper, I returned to devote myself to him, when

his younger guests were departed. Our social employment at this season he has very cheerfully described in the following Letter to Mrs. Courtenay.

LETTER LIII.

To Mrs. COURTENAY.

Weston, Nov. 4, 1793.

I seldom rejoice in a day of soaking rain like this, but in this, my dearest Catharina, I do rejoice sincerely, because it affords me an opportunity of writing to you, which if fair weather had invited us into the orchard walk at the usual hour, I should not easily have found. I am a most busy man, busy to a degree, that sometimes half distracts me; but if complete distraction be occasioned by having the thoughts too much and too long attached to a single point, I am in no danger of it, with such a perpetual whirl are mine whisked about from one subject to another. When two poets meet there

are fine doings I can assure you. My Homer finds work for Hayley, and his Life of Milton work for me, so that we are neither of us one moment idle. Poor Mrs. Unwin in the mean time sits quiet in her corner, occasionally laughing at us both, and not seldom interrupting us with some question or remark, for which she is constantly rewarded by me with a "Hush—hold your peace." Bless yourself, my dear Catharina, that you are not connected with a poet, especially that you have not two to deal with; ladies who have, may be bidden indeed to hold their peace, but very little peace have they. How should they in fact have any, continually enjoined as they are to be silent.

* * * * *

The same fever that has been so epidemic there, has been severely felt here likewise; some have died, and a multitude have been in danger. Two under our own roof have been infected with it, and I am not sure that I have perfectly escaped myself, but I am now well again.

I have persuaded Hayley to stay a week longer, and again my hopes revive, that he may yet have an

opportunity to know my friends before he returns into Sussex. I write amidst a chaos of interruptions: Hayley on one hand spouts Greek, and on the other hand Mrs. Unwin continues talking, sometimes to us, and sometimes, because we are both too busy to attend to her, she holds a dialogue with herself. Query, is not this a bull—and ought I not instead of dialogue to have said soliloquy?

Adieu! With our united love to all your party, and with ardent wishes soon to see you all at Weston, I remain, my dearest Catharina.

Ever yours,

W. C.

Cowper entreated me with great kindness to remain the whole winter at Weston, and engage with him in a regular and complete revisal of his Homer. I wanted not inclination for an office so agreeable; but it struck me that I might render much more essential service to the poet, as I returned through London, by quickening in the minds of his more powerful friends, a seasonable attention to his interest and welfare. My fears for him, in every point of view, were alarmed by his present very singular

condition. He possessed completely at this period, all the admirable faculties of his mind, and all the native tenderness of his heart; but there was something indescribable in his appearance, which led me to apprehend, that without some signal event in his favour, to re-animate his spirits, they would gradually sink into hopeless dejection. The state of his aged infirm companion afforded additional ground for increasing solicitude. Her cheerful and beneficent spirit could hardly resist her own accumulated maladies, so far as to preserve ability sufficient to watch over the tender health of him, whom she had watched and guarded so long. Imbecility of body and mind must gradually render this tender and heroic woman unfit for the charge which she had so laudably sustained. The signs of such imbecility were beginning to be painfully visible; nor can nature present a spectacle more truly pitiable than imbecility in such a shape, eagerly grasping for dominion, which it knows not either how to retain, or how to relinquish.

I left Weston in November, painfully anxious for the alarming state of my two friends, and I was so unfortunate as to add to their complicated troubles, some degree of inquietude for my health. A slight

attack of an epidemical fever had rather hastened than retarded my departure; but my indisposition proved more serious than I had supposed it to be; and instead of being able to execute some literary commissions for Cowper in London, with the alacrity which affection suggests, I was obliged to inform him that I was confined by illness. He wrote to me immediately, with the tenderness peculiar to himself, and my reviving health soon enabled me to enliven his apprehensive mind, not only, with an account of my recovery, but with intelligence relating to his own literary engagements, that had a tendency to relieve his spirits from a considerable part of their present embarrassment and dejection. His next Letter to one of his confidential friends, contains a very cheerful and just description of his favorite residence.

LETTER LIV.

To JOSEPH HILL, Esqr.

Weston, Nov. 5. 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In a letter from Lady Hesketh, which I received not long since, she informed me

how very pleasantly she had spent some time at Wargrove. We now begin to expect her here, where our charms of situation are perhaps not equal to yours, yet by no means contemptible. She told me she had spoken to you in very handsome terms of the country round about us, but not so of our house, and the view before it. The house itself, however, is not unworthy some commendation; small as it is, it is neat and neater than she is aware of; for my study, and the room over it, have been repaired and beautified this summer, and little more was wanting to make it an abode sufficiently commodious for a man of my moderate desires. As to the prospect from it, that she misrepresented strangely, as I hope soon to have an opportunity to convince her by ocular demonstration. She told you, I know, of certain cottages opposite to us, or rather she described them as poor houses and hovels, that effectually blind our windows. But none such exist. On the contrary, the opposite object and the only one, is an orchard, so well planted, and with trees of such growth, that we seem to look into a wood, or rather to be surrounded by one. Thus, placed as we are in the midst of a village, we have none of those disagreeables that belong to such a position, and the village it-

self is one of the prettiest I know; terminated at one end by the church tower, seen through the trees, and at the other, by a very handsome gateway, opening into a fine grove of elms, belonging to our neighbour Courtenay. How happy should I be to shew it instead of describing it to you!

Adieu, my dear friend.

W. C.

LETTER LV.

To the Revd. WALTER BAGOT.

Weston, Nov. 10, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You are very kind to consider my literary engagements, and to make them a reason for not interrupting me more frequently with a letter, but though I am indeed as busy as an author or an editor can well be, and am not apt to be overjoyed at the arrival of letters from uninteristing quarters, I shall always, I hope, have leisure both to peruse and to answer those of my real friends, and to do both with pleasure.

I have to thank you much for your benevolent aid in the affair of my friend Hurdis. You have doubtless learned ere now that he has succeeded, and carried the prize by a majority of twenty. He is well qualified for the post he has gained. So much the better for the honour of the Oxonian laurel, and so much the more for the credit of those, who have favored him with their suffrages.

I am entirely of your mind respecting this conflagration by which all Europe suffers at present, and is likely to suffer for a long time to come. The same mistake seems to have prevailed as in the American business. We then flattered ourselves that the colonies would prove an easy conquest, and when all the neighbour nations armed themselves against France, we imagined, I believe, that she too would be presently vanquished. But we begin already to be undeceived, and God only knows to what a degree we may find we have erred, at the conclusion. Such however is the state of things all around us, as reminds me continually of the Psalmist's expression—"*He shall break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*"—And I rather wish than hope in some of my me-

ancholy moods that England herself may escape a fracture.

I remain, truly yours,

W. C.

LETTER LVI.

To the Revd. Mr. HURDIS.

Weston, Nov. 24, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

Though my congratulations have been delayed, you have no friend, numerous as your friends are, who has more sincerely rejoiced in your success than I. It was no small mortification to me, to find that three out of the six, whom I had engaged, were not qualified to vote. You have prevailed however, and by a considerable majority; there is, therefore, no room left for regret. When your short note arrived, which gave me the agreeable news of your victory, our friend of Eartham was with me, and shared largely in the joy, that I felt on the occasion. He left me but a few days since, having spent somewhat more than a fortnight here; during which

time we employed all our leisure hours in the revisal of his Life of Milton. It is now finished, and a very finished work it is; and one that will do great honour I am persuaded to the biographer, and the excellent man, of injured memory, who is the subject of it. As to my own concern with the works of this first of poets, which has been long a matter of burthensome contemplation, I have the happiness to find at last, that I am at liberty to postpone my labours. While I expected that my commentary would be called for in the ensuing spring, I looked forward to the undertaking with dismay, not seeing a shadow of probability that I should be ready to answer the demand. For this ultimate revisal of my Homer, together with the notes, occupies completely at present (and will for some time longer) all the little leisure that I have for study. Leisure which I gain at this season of the year, by rising long before day-light.

You are now become a nearer neighbour, and as your professorship, I hope, will not engross you wholly, will find an opportunity to give me your company at Weston. Let me hear from you soon, tell me how you like your new office, and whether you perform the duties of it with pleasure to yourself.

With much pleasure to others you will, I doubt not, and with equal advantage.

W. C.

LETTER LVII.

To SAMUEL ROSE, Esqr.

Weston, Nov. 29, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have risen, while the owls are still hooting, to pursue my accustomed labours in the mine of Homer; but before I enter upon them, shall give the first moment of day-light to the purpose of thanking you for your last Letter, containing many pleasant articles of intelligence, with nothing to abate the pleasantness of them, except the single circumstance that we are not likely to see you here so soon as I expected. My hope was, that the first frost would bring you, and the amiable painter with you: If, however, you are prevented by the business of your respective professions, you are well prevented, and I will endeavour to be patient. When the latter was here, he mentioned one day the subject

of Diomede's horses, driven under the axle of his chariot, by the thunder-bolt which fell at their feet, as a subject for his pencil. It is certainly a noble one, and therefore worthy of his study and attention. It occurred to me at the moment, but I know not what it was that made me forget it again the next moment, that the horses of Achilles flying over the foss, with Patroclus and Automedon in the chariot, would be a good companion for it. Should you happen to recollect this, when you next see him, you may submit it, if you please, to his consideration. I stumbled yesterday on another subjeet, which reminded me of said excellent artist, as likely to afford a fine opportunity to the expression that he could give it. It is found in the shooting-match in the twenty-third book of the Iliad, between Meriones and Teucer. The former cuts the string with which the dove is tied to the mast-head, and sets her at liberty; the latter standing at his side, in all the eagerness of emulation, points an arrow at the mark with his right hand, while with his left he snatches the bow from his competitor; he is a fine poetical figure, but Mr. Lawrence himself must judge whether or not he promises as well for the canvas.

He does great honour to my physiognomy by

his intention to get it engraved, and though I think, I foresee that this *private publication* will grow in time into a publication of absolute publicity, I find it impossible to be dissatisfied with any thing that seems eligible both to him and you. To say the truth, when a man has once turned his mind inside out for the inspection of all who chuse to inspect it, to make a secret of his face seems but little better than a self contradiction. At the same time however, I shall be best pleased if it be kept, according to your intentions, as a rarity.

I have lost Hayley, and begin to be uneasy at not hearing from him, tell me about him when you write.

I should be happy to have a work of mine embellished by Lawrence, and made a companion for a work of Hayley's. Is is an event to which I look forward with the utmost complacence. I cannot tell you what a relief I feel it, not to be pressed for Milton.

W. C.

LETTER LVIII.

To SAMUEL ROSE, Esqr.

Weston, Dec. 8, 1793.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In my last I forgot to thank you for the box of books, containing also the pamphlets. We have read, that is to say, my Cousin has, who reads to us in an evening, the history of Jonathan Wild; and found it highly entertaining. The satire on great men is witty, and I believe perfectly just: we have no censure to pass on it, unless that we think the character of Mrs. Heartfree not well sustained; not quite delicate in the latter part of it; and that the constant effect of her charms upon every man who sees her, has a sameness in it that is tiresome, and betrays either much carelessness, or idleness, or lack of invention. It is possible, indeed, that the author might intend by this circumstance, a satirical glance at novelists, whose heroines are generally all bewitching; but it is a fault that he had better have noticed in another manner, and not have exemplified in his own.

The first volume of *Man as he is*, has lain

unread in my study window this twelvemonth, and would have been returned unread to its owner, had not my Cousin come in good time to save it from that disgrace. We are now reading it, and find it excellent; abounding with wit and just sentiment, and knowledge both of books and men.

Adieu!

W. C.

LETTER LIX.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Dec. 8, 1793.

I have waited, and waited impatiently, for a line from you, and am at last determined to send you one, to enquire what is become of you, and why you are silent so much longer than usual.

I want to know many things, which only you can tell me, but especially I want to know what has been the issue of your conference with Nichol: Has he seen your work? I am impatient for the appea-

rance of it, because impatient to have the spotless credit of the great poet's character, as a man and a citizen, vindicated, as it ought to be, and as it never will be again.

It is a great relief to me, that my Miltonic labours are suspended. I am now busy in transcribing the alterations of Homer, having finished the whole revisal. I must then write a new Preface, which done I shall endeavour immediately to descant on *The four Ages.*

Adieu! my dear Brother.

W. C.

The reader may now be anxious to learn some particulars of the projected poem, which has been repeatedly mentioned under the title of *The four Ages;* a poem to which the mind of Cowper looked eagerly

forward, as to a new and highly promising field for his excursive and benevolent fancy. The idea had been suggested to him in the year 1791, by a very amiable clerical neighbour, Mr. Buchanan, who in the humble curacy of Ravenstone (a little sequestered village within the distance of an easy walk from Weston) possesses, in a scene of rustic privacy, such extensive scholarship, such gentleness of manners, and such a contemplative dignity of mind, as would certainly raise him to a more suitable, and indeed to a conspicuous situation, if the professional success of a divine were the immediate consequence of exemplary merit. This gentleman who had occasionally enjoyed the gratification of visiting Cowper, suggested to him, with a becoming diffidence, the project of a new poem on the four distinct periods of life, infancy, youth, manhood, and old age. He imparted his ideas to the poet by a letter, in which he observed, with equal modesty and truth, that Cowper was particularly qualified to relish, and to do justice to the subject; a subject which he supposed not hitherto treated expressly, as its importance deserves, by any poet ancient or modern.

Mr. Buchanan added to this letter a brief sketch of contents for the projected composition. This

hasty sketch he enlarged by the kind encouragement of Cowper. How cheerfully the poet received the idea, and how liberally he applauded the worthy divine who suggested it, will appear from the following billet, written immediately on the receipt of the more ample sketch.

To the Revd. Mr. BUCHANAN.

Weston, May 11, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

You have sent me a beautiful poem, wanting nothing but metre. I would to heaven that you would give it that requisite yourself; for he who could make the sketch, cannot but be well qualified to finish. But if you will not, I will; provided always nevertheless, that God gives me ability, for it will require no common share to do justice to your conceptions.

I am much yours,

W. C.

Your little messenger vanished before I could catch him.

Various impediments rendered it hardly possible for Cowper to devote himself, as he wished to do, to the immediate prosecution of a plan so promising; yet he cherished the idea for some years in his mind, and was particularly pleased (as the reader may recollect from a passage in one of his Letters to me) with a prospect that this intended poem might form a portion of a very ample original confederate work, which we hoped to produce in concert with the united powers of some admirable artists, who were justly dear to us both.

All who delight to accompany the genius of Cowper in animated flights of moral contemplation, will deeply regret that he was precluded by a variety of trouble from indulging his ardent imagination in a work, that would have afforded him such ample scope for all the sweetness and all the sublimity of his spirit. His felicity of description, and exqusite sensibility; his experience of life, and his sanctity of character, rendered him singularly fit and worthy to delineate the progress of nature in all the different stages of human existence.

A poem of such extent and diversity, happily completed by such a poet, would be a national treasure, of infinite value to the country that gave it

birth, and I had fervently hoped, that England might receive it from the hand of Cowper.

This work in his first conception of it was a favourite of his fancy, but he soon entertained an apprehension that he should never accomplish it. Writto his friend of St. Paul's in 1793, the poet said—— "*The Four Ages* is a subject that delights me when "I think of it; but I am ready to fear, that all my "ages will be exhausted before I shall be at leisure "to write upon it."

With a regret, proportioned to my former hopes of this poem, I now impart to my readers the minute and imperfect fragment of a project so mighty. Yet even the few verses which Cowper had thrown on paper as the commencement of such a work, will be read with peculiar interest, if there is truth, as I feel there is, in the following remark of the elder Pliny.—— "*Suprema opera artificum imperfec-*
"*tasque Tabulas, in majori admiratione esse quam*
"*perfecta; Quippe in iis lineamenta reliqua ipsæque*
"*cogitationes artificum spectantur, atque in lenocinio*
"*commendationis dolor est:—Manus, cum id agerent*
"*extinctæ, desiderantur.*"

THE FOUR AGES.

A BRIEF FRAGMENT

OF AN EXTENSIVE PROJECTED POEM.

" I could be well content, allowed the use
" Of past experience, and the wisdom glean'd
" From worn-out follies, now acknowledg'd such,
" To recommence life's trial, in the hope
" Of fewer errors, on a second proof!"

Thus, while grey evening lull'd the wind, and call'd
Fresh odours from the shrubb'ry at my side,
Taking my lonely winding walk I mus'd,
And held accustom'd conference with my heart;
When, from within it, thus a voice replied.

" Could'st thou in truth? and art thou taught at length
" This wisdom, and but this, from all the past?
" Is not the pardon of thy long arrear,
" Time wasted, violated laws, abuse
" Of talents, judgments, mercies, better far
" Than opportunity vouchsaf'd to err
" With less excuse, and haply, worse effect?"

I heard, and acquiesced: Then to and fro
Oft pacing, as the mariner his deck,
My grav'lly bounds, from self to human kind
I pass'd, and next consider'd——what is man?

Knows he his origin?——can he ascend
By reminiscence to his earliest date?
Slept he in Adam? and in those from him
Through num'rous generations, till he found
At length his destin'd moment to be born?
Or was he not, till fashion'd in the womb?
Deep myst'ries both! which schoolmen much have toil'd
To unriddle, and have left them myst'ries still.

It is an evil, incident to man,
And of the worst, that unexplor'd he leaves
Truths useful and attainable with ease,
To search forbidden deeps, where myst'ry lies
Not to be solv'd, and useless, if it might.
Myst'ries are food for angels; they digest
With ease, and find them nutriment; but man,
While yet he dwells below, must stoop to glean
His manna from the ground, or starve, and die.

It may, in some degree, alleviate the regret which lovers of poetry must feel, that this interesting project was never accomplished by Cowper, to be informed, that a modern poem on the four ages of man was written by M. Werthmuller, a citizen of Zurich, and translated into Latin verse, by Dr. Olstrochi, librarian to the Ambrosian library at Milan. This performance gave rise to another German poem on the four ages of woman, by M. Zacharie, professor of poetry at Brunswick, an elegant little work, that breathes a spirit of tenderness and piety.

The encreasing infirmities of Cowper's aged companion, Mrs. Unwin, his filial solicitude to alleviate her sufferings, and the gathering clouds of deeper despondency that began to settle on his mind, in the first month of the year 1794, not only rendered it impossible for him to advance in any great original performance, but to use his own expressive words, in the close of his correspondence with his highly valued friend, Mr. Rose, made all composition either of poetry or prose impracticable. Writing to that friend in January 1794, he says, "I have just ability enough to transcribe, which is all that I have to do at present: God knows that I write, at this moment, under the pressure of sadness not to be described."

It was a spectacle that might awaken compassion in the sternest of human characters; to see the health, the comfort, and the little fortune of a man, so distinguished by intellectual endowments, and by moral excellence, perishing most deplorably. A sight so affecting made many friends of Cowper solicitous, and importunate, that his declining life should be honourably protected by public munificence. Men of all parties agreed that a pension might be granted to an author of his acknowledged merit, with graceful propriety, and we might apply to him, on this topic, the very expressive words which the poet Claudian addresses, on a different occasion, to his favourite hero:

Suffragia vulgi
Jam tibi detulerant, quidquid mox debuit aula.

It was devoutly to be wished that the declining spirits of Cowper should be speedily animated, and sustained, by assistance of this nature, because the growing influence of melancholy not only filled him with distressing ideas of his own fortune, but threatened to rob him of the power to make any kind of exertion in his own behalf. His situation, and his

merits were perfectly understood, humanely felt, and honourably acknowledged by persons who, while they declared that he ought to receive an immediate public support, seemed to possess both the inclination, and the power, to ensure it. But such is the difficulty of doing real good, experienced even by the great and powerful, or so apt are statesmen to forget the pressing exigence of meritorious individuals, in the distractions of official perplexity, that month after month elapsed, in which the intimate friends of Cowper confidently, yet vainly, expected to see him happily rescued from some of the darkest evils impending over him, by an honourable provision for life.

Imagination can hardly devise any human concondition more truly affecting than the state of the poet at this period. His generous and faithful guardian, Mrs. Unwin, who had preserved him through seasons of the severest calamity, was now, with her faculties and fortune impaired, sinking fast into second childhood. The distress of heart that he felt in beholding the cruel change in a companion so justly dear to him, conspiring with his constitutional melancholy, was gradually undermining the exquisite faculties of his mind. But deprest as he was by these

complicated afflictions, Providence was far from deserting this excellent man. His female relation, whose regard he had cultivated as his favourite correspondent, now devoted herself very nobly to the superintendence of a house, whose two interesting inhabitants were rendered, by age and trouble, almost incapable of attending to the ordinary offices of life.

Those only, who have lived with the superannuated, and the melancholy, can properly appreciate the value of such magnanimous friendship, or perfectly apprehend what personal sufferings it must cost the mortal, who exerts it, if that mortal has received from nature a frame of compassionate sensibility. The lady to whom I allude, has felt too severely, in her own health, the heavy tax that mortality is forced to pay for a resolute perseverance in such painful duty.

The two last of Cowper's Letters to me, that breathe a spirit of mental activity, and cheerful friendship, were written in the close of the year 1793, and in the beginning of the next. They arose from an incident that it may be proper to relate, before I insert the Letters.

On my return from Weston, I had given an account of the poet to his old friend, Lord Thurlow.

That learned and powerful critic, in speaking of Cowper's Homer, happened to declare himself not satisfied with his version of Hector's admirable prayer in caressing his child. We both ventured on new translations of the prayer, which I immediately sent to Cowper, and the following Letters will prove with what just and manly freedom of spirit he was at this time able to criticize the composition of his friends, and his own.

LETTER LX.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr

Weston, Dec. 17, 1793.

Oh Jove! and all ye Gods! grant this my son
To prove, like me, pre-eminent in Troy!
In valour such, and firmness of command!
Be he extoll'd, when he returns from fight,
As far his sire's superior! may he slay
His enemy, bring home his gory spoils,
And may his mother's heart o'erflow with joy!

I rose this morning, at six o'clock, on purpose to translate this prayer again,

and to write to my dear Brother. Here you have it, such as it is, not perfectly according to my own liking, but as well as I could make it, and I think better than either your's, or Lord Thurlow's. You with your six lines have made yourself stiff and ungraceful, and he with his seven has produced as good prose as heart can wish, but no poetry at all. A scrupulous attention to the letter has spoiled you both, you have neither the spirit nor the manner of Homer. A portion of both may be found, I believe, in my version, but not so much as I could wish—it is better however than the printed one. His Lordship's two first lines I cannot very well understand; he seems to me to give a sense to the original that does not belong to it. Hector, I apprehend, does not say, "Grant "that he may prove himself my son, and be emi-"nent, &c.—but grant that this my son may prove "eminent"——which is a material difference. In the latter sense I find the simplicity of an antient; in the former, that is to say, in the notion of a man proving himself his father's son by similar merit, the finesse and dexterity of a modern. His Lordship too makes the man, who gives the young hero his commendation, the person, who returns from battle, whereas Homer makes the young hero himself that

person, at least if Clarke is a just interpreter, which I suppose is hardly to be disputed.

If my old friend would look into my Preface, he would find a principle laid down there, which perhaps it would not be easy to invalidate, and which properly attended to would equally secure a translation from stiffness, and from wildness. The principle I mean is this—" Close, but not so close as to be servile! free, but not so free as to be licentious!" A superstitious fidelity loses the spirit, and a loose deviation the sense of the translated author——a happy moderation in either case is the only possible way of preserving both.

Thus have I disciplined you both, and now, if you please, you may both discipline me. I shall not enter my version in my book till it has undergone your strictures at least, and should you write to the noble critic again, you are welcome to submit it to his. We are three awkward fellows indeed, if we cannot amongst us make a tolerable good translation of six lines of Homer.

Adieu!

W. C.

LETTER LXI.

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Weston, Jan. 5, 1794.

MY DEAR HAYLEY,

I have waited, but waited in vain, for a propitious moment when I might give my old friend's objections the consideration they deserve; I shall at last be forced to send a vague answer, unworthy to be sent to a person accustomed, like him, to close reasoning, and abstruse discussion, for I rise after ill rest, and with a frame of mind perfectly unsuited to the occasion. I sit too at the window for light's sake, where I am so cold that my pen slips out of my fingers. First, I will give you a translation de novo, of this untranslatable prayer. It is shaped as nearly as I could contrive to his Lordship's ideas, but I have little hope that it will satisfy him.

> Grant Jove, and all ye Gods, that this my son,
> Be, as myself have been, illustrious here!
> A valiant man! and let him reign in Troy!

May all who witness his return from fight
Hereafter, say——he far excels his sire;
And let him bring back gory trophies, stript
From foes slain by him, to his mother's joy.

Imlac in Rasselas says—I forget to whom, "You have convinced me that it is impossible to be a poet." In like manner I might say to his Lordship, you have convinced me that it is impossible to be a translator; to be a translator, on his terms at least, is I am sure impossible. On his terms I would defy Homer himself, were he alive, to translate the Paradise Lost into Greek. Yet Milton had Homer much in his eye when he composed that poem. Whereas Homer never thought of me or my translation. There are minutiæ in every language, which transfused into another will spoil the version. Such extreme fidelity is in fact unfaithful. Such close resemblance takes away all likeness. The original is elegant, easy, natural; the copy is clumsy, constrained, unnatural: To what is this owing? To the adoption of terms not congenial to your purpose, and of a context, such as no man writing an original work would make use of. Homer is every thing that a poet should be. A translation of Homer so made, will be every thing a translation of

Homer should not be. Because it will be written in no language under Heaven. It will be English, and it will be Greek, and therefore it will be neither. He is the man, whoever he be (I do not pretend to be that man myself) he is the man best qualified as a translator of Homer, who has drenched, and steeped, and soaked himself in the effusions of his genius, till he has imbibed their colour to the bone, and who when he is thus dyed through and through, distinguishing between what is essentially Greek, and what may be habited in English, rejects the former, and is faithful to the latter, as far as the purposes of fine poetry will permit, and no farther: this, I think, may be easily proved. Homer is every where remarkable either for ease, dignity, or energy of expression; for grandeur of conception, and a majestic flow of numbers. If we copy him so closely as to make every one of these excellent properties of his absolutely unattainable, which will certainly be the effect of too close a copy, instead of translating, we murder him. Therefore, after all his Lordship has said, I still hold hold freedom to be an indispensible. Freedom, I mean, with respect to the expression; freedom so limited, as never to leave behind the *matter;* but at the same time indulged with a sufficient scope to secure

the spirit, and as much as possible of the manner. I say as much as possible, because an English manner must differ from a Greek one, in order to be graceful, and for this there is no remedy. Can an ungraceful, awkward, translation of Homer be a good one? No: but a graceful, easy, natural, faithful version of him, will not that be a good one? Yes: Allow me but this, and I insist upon it, that such a one may be produced on my principles, and can be produced on no other.

I have not had time to criticize his Lordship's other version. You know how little time I have for any thing, and can tell him so.

Adieu! my dear Brother. I have now tired both you and myself; and with the love of the whole trio, remain

Yours ever,

W. C.

Reading his Lordship's sentiments over again, I am inclined to think, that in all I have said, I have only given him back the same in other terms. He disallows both the absolute *free*, and the absolute *close*—so do I, and, if I understand myself, have said so in my Preface. He wishes to recommennd a

medium, though he will not call it so, so do I; only we express it differently. What is it then that we dispute about? My head is not good enough to day to discover.

These Letters were followed by such a silence on the part of my invaluable correspondent, as filled me with the severest apprehensions; because I well knew, that while he retained any glimmerings of mental health, his affectionate spirit was eager to unburthen itself to a friend of whose sympathy, in all his sufferings, he was perfectly assured. The accounts of him, with which I was favoured by his amiable relation (who shocked as she was by the helpless state and deplorable infirmities of Mrs. Unwin, now resided with these piteous invalides) encreased my anxiety for my dejected and silent friend.

Little as the probability appeared that my presence could render him any essential service, I was induced to visit Weston once more, by the following friendly exhortation in a Letter from Cowper's

compassionate neighbour, Mr. Greatheed. The clergyman whom Cowper himself had taught me to esteem on our first acquaintance.

FROM

The Reverend Mr. GREATHEED,

To WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esqr.

Newport-Pagnel, April 8, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

Lady Hesketh's correspondence acquainted you with the melancholy relapse of our dear friend at Weston; but I am uncertain whether you know, that in the last fortnight, he has refused food of every kind, except now and then a very small piece of toasted bread, dipped generally in water, sometimes mixed with a little wine. This, her Ladyship informs me, was the case till last Saturday, since when he has eat a little at each family meal. He persists in refusing such medicines as are indispensable to his state of body, In such circumstances,

his long continuance in life cannot be expected. How devoutly to be wished is the alleviation of his danger and distress! You, dear Sir, who know so well the worth of our beloved and admired friend, sympathize with his affliction, and deprecate his loss doubtless in no ordinary degree; you have already most effectually expressed and proved the warmth of your friendship. I cannot think that any thing but your society would have been sufficient, during the infirmity under which his mind has long been oppressed, to have supported him against the shock of Mrs. Unwin's paralytic attack. I am certain that nothing else could have prevailed upon him to undertake the journey to Eartham. You have succeeded where his other friends knew they could not, and where they apprehended no one could. How natural therefore, nay how reasonable, is it for them to look to you, as most likely to be instrumental, under the blessing of God, for relief in the present distressing and alarming crisis. It is indeed scarcely attemptable to ask any person to take such a journey, and involve himself in so melancholy a scene, with an uncertainty of the desired success: increased as the apparent difficulty is by dear Mr. Cowper's aversion to all

company, and by poor Mrs. Unwin's mental and bodily infirmities. On these accounts Lady Hesketh dares not ask it of you, rejoiced as she would be at your arrival. Am not I, dear Sir, a very presumptuous person, who, in the face of all opposition dare do this? I am emboldened by those two powerful supporters, conscience and experience. Was I at Eartham, I would certainly undertake the labour I presume to recommend, for the bare possibility of restoring Mr. Cowper to himself, to his friends, to the public, and to God.

The benevolent wishes of this sincere and fervent advocate for genius and virtue, sinking under calamity, were far from being accomplished by my arrival at Weston. My unhappy friend was too much overwhelmed by his oppressive malady to shew even the least glimmering of satisfaction at the appearance of a guest whom he used to receive with the most lively expressions of affectionate delight.

It is the nature of this tremendous melancholy not only to enshroud and stifle the finest faculties of the mind, but it suspends, and apparently annihilates,

for a time, the strongest and best-rooted affections of the heart. I had frequent and painful occasion to observe, in this affecting visit to my suffering friend, that he seemed to shrink, at times, from every human creature, except from the gentle voice of my son.

This exception I attributed partly to the peculiar charm which is generally found in the manners of tender ingenuous children; and partly to that uncommon sweetness of character which had inspired Cowper with a degree of parental partiality towards this highly promising youth.

I had hoped indeed that his influence at this season might be superior to my own over the dejected spirit of my friend; but though it was so, to a considerable degree, our united efforts to cheer and amuse him were utterly frustrated by his calamitous depression.

I may yet hope that my distressing visit to this very dear sufferer was productive of some little good. My presence afforded an opportunity to his excellent relation, Lady Hesketh, who acted at this time as his immediate guardian, to quit her charge for a few days, that she might have a personal conference concerning him, with the eminent Dr. Willis. A friendly letter from Lord Thurlow to that celebrated physician, had

requested his attention to the highly interesting sufferer. Dr. Willis prescribed for Cowper, and saw him at Weston, but not with that success and felicity which made his medical skill on another most awful occasion, the source of national delight and exultation.

Indeed the extraordinary state of Cowper appeared to abound with circumstances very unfavourable to his mental relief. The daily sight of a being reduced to such deplorable imbecility, as now overwhelmed Mrs. Unwin, was in itself sufficient to plunge a tender spirit into extreme melancholy; yet to separate two friends, so long accustomed to minister, with the purest and most vigilant benevolence to the infirmities of each other, was a measure so pregnant with complicated distraction, that it could not be advised or attempted. It remained only to palliate the sufferings of each in their present most pitiable condition, and to trust in the mercy of that God who had supported them together through periods of very dark affliction, though not so doubly deplorable as the present.

I had formerly regarded Weston as a scene that exhibited human nature in a most delightful point of view. I had applauded there no common triumphs of ge-

nius and friendship. The contrast that I now contemplated, has often led me to repeat (with such feelings as those only who have surveyed a contrast so deplorable can possibly conceive) the following pathetic exclamation in the Sampson Agonistes of Milton.

> God of our fathers, what is man?
>
> —— —— ——
>
> Since such as thou hast solemnly elected,
> With gifts and graces eminently adorned;
>
> —— —— ——
>
> Yet towards these thus dignified, thou oft
> Amidst their height of noon,
> Changest thy count'nance, and thy hand, with no regard
> Of highest favours past
> From thee on them, or them to thee of service.
>
> —— —— ——
>
> So deal not with this once thy glorious champion!
> What do I beg? How has thou dealt already!
> Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn
> His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end!

In the spirit of this prayer every being sympathized who had enjoyed a personal acquaintance with Cowper in his happier days, or felt the beneficent influence of his unclouded mind: but for reasons inscrutable to human apprehension, it was the will of

Heaven, that this admirable and meritorions invalide should pass through a length of sufferings, on which I am very far from being disposed to detain the attention of my reader:

"Animus meminisse horret, luctuque refugit."

I shall therefore only say, that although it has been my lot to be acquainted with affliction in a variety of shapes, I hardly ever felt the anguish of sympathy with an afflicted friend in a severer degree, than during the few weeks that I passed with Cowper, at this season of his sufferings. The pain that I endured from this sympathy, was, I believe, very visible in my features, and it obtained for me, from his excellent, accomplished neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Courtenay, the most delicate and endearing attention—kindness so peculiarly consoling, that I can never cease to remember, and to speak of it with gratitude, while the faculty of memory remains to me.

Indeed as my own health had been much shattered by a series of troubles, it would probably have sunk utterly under the pressure of this distressing scene, had not some comforts of a very soothing nature been

providentially blended with the calamities of my friend.

It was on the 23d of April, 1794, in one of those melancholy mornings, when his compassionate relation Lady Hesketh and myself were watching together over this dejected sufferer, that a letter from Lord Spencer arrived at Weston, to announce the intended grant of such a pension from his Majesty to Cowper, as would ensure an honourable competence for the residue of his life. This intelligence produced in the friends of the poet very lively emotions of delight, yet blended with pain almost as powerful; for it was painful, in no trifling degree, to reflect, that these desirable smiles of good fortune could not impart even a faint glimmering of joy to the dejected invalide.

His friends however had the animating hope that a day would arrive when they might see him receive, with a cheerful and joyous gratitude, this royal recompence for merit universally acknowledged. They knew that when he recovered his suspended faculties, he must be particularly pleased to find himself chiefly indebted for his good fortune to the active benevolence of that nobleman, who, though not personally

acquainted with Cowper, stood, of all his noble friends, the highest in his esteem.

Indeed it is a justice due to the great to declare, that many of them concurred in promoting on this occasion, the interest of the poet; and they spoke of him with a truth, and a liberality of praise, that did honour both to him, and to themselves. It is not often that majesty has opportunities of granting a reward for literary merit, where the individual who receives it, has so clear and unquestionable a title both to royal munificence, and to popular affection. But the heart and spirit of Cowper were eminently loyal, and patriotic. He has spoken occasionally of his sovereign in verse, with personal regard, but without a shadow of servility; and his poetry abounds with eloquent and just descriptions of that double duty which an Englishman owes to the crown and to the people.

Perhaps no poet has more clearly and forcibly delineated the respective duties that belong both to subjects and to sovereigns: I allude to an admirable passage on this topic in the fifth book of the Task:— It is time to return to the sufferer at Weston. He was unhappily disabled from feeling the favour he received, but an annuity of three hundred a year

was graciously secured to him, and rendered payable to his friend Mr. Rose, as the trustee of Cowper.

After devoting a few weeks to Weston, I was under a painful necessity of forcing myself away from my unhappy friend, who though he appeared to take no pleasure in my society, expressed extreme reluctance to let me depart. I hardly ever endured an hour more dreadfully distressing, than the hour in which I left him. Yet the anguish of it would have been greatly increased, had I been conscious that he was destined to years of this dark depression, and that I should see him no more. I still hoped from the native vigour of his frame, that, as he had formerly struggled through longer fits of this oppressive malady, his darkened mind would yet emerge from this calamitous eclipse, and shine forth again with new lustre. These hopes were considerably encreased at a subsequent period; but alas! they were delusive; for although he recovered sufficient command of his faculties to write a few occasional poems, and to retouch his Homer, yet the prospect of his perfect recovery was never realized. I had beheld the poet of unrivalled genius, the sympathetic friend, and the delightful companion, for the last time; and I must now relate the gloomy residue of his life, not from

my own personal observation, but from the faithful account of his young kinsman of Norfolk, who devoted himself to the care of this beloved sufferer, and persevered to the last in that delicate and awful charge.

From the time when I left my unhappy friend at Weston, in the spring of the year 1794, he remained there under the tender vigilance of his affectionate relation, Lady Hesketh, till the latter end of July 1795 :—a long season of the darkest depression! in which the best medical advice, and the influence of time appeared equally unable to lighten that afflictive burthen which pressed incessantly on his spirits.

At this period it became absolutely necesary to make a great and painful exertion for the mental relief of the various sufferers at Weston. Mrs. Unwin was sinking very fast into second childhood; the health of Lady Hesketh was much impaired, and the dejection of Cowper was so severe, that a change of scene was considered as essential to the preservation of his life.

Under circumstances so deplorable, his kinsman of Norfolk most tenderly and generously undertook to conduct the two venerable invalides from Buckinghamshire into Norfolk, and so to regulate their

future lives that every possible expedient might be tried for the recovery of his revered relation.

It is hardly possible for friendship to undertake a charge more delicate and arduous, or to sustain all the pains that must necessarily attend it, with a more constant exertion of gentle fortitude and affectionate fidelity.

The local attachment of Cowper to his favourite village of Weston was strong in no common degree, and rendered his migration from it, though an event of medical necessity, yet a scene of peculiar sufferings. Those who knew his passionate attachment to that pleasant village, how deeply he lamented his absence from it, and how little he gained by a change of situation, though considered as important to the revival of his health, can hardly help regretting that he did not close his days in that favourite scene, and find at last, according to the wish that he tenderly expresses in the conclusion of the Task,

> A safe retreat
> Beneath the turf, that he had often trod.

But painful and unprofitable as it proved in a medical point of view, his removal from Weston was very pro-

perly considered by his relations as an act of imperious duty. He quitted it with reluctance, and perhaps I cannot more forcibly express both the regard of Cowper, and my own regard for that endearing scene, than by introducing at this time, when we are taking leave of Weston for ever, a little poem, that I believe to be the last original work which he produced in that beloved abode. The poem describes not his residence, but the encreasing infirmities of that aged companion, who had so long contributed to his domestic comfort. I question if any language on earth can exhibit a specimen of verse more exquisitely tender.

TO

MARY.

The twentieth year is well nigh past,
Since first our sky was overcast,
Ah would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow——
'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore;
Now rust disus'd, and shine no more,
My Mary!

For though thou gladly would'st fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play'd'st the huswife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art,
Have wound themselves about this heart.
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language utter'd in a dream;
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme.
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light.
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign;
Yet gently prest, press gently mine,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st,
That now at every step thou mov'st
Upheld by two, yet still thou lov'st,
My Mary!

And still to love, though prest with ill;
In wint'ry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But ah! by constant heed I know,
How oft the sadness that I show,
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last,
My Mary!

On Tuesday the twenty-eighth of July, 1795, Cowper and Mrs. Unwin removed under the care and guidance of Mr. Johnson, from Weston to North-Tuddenham, in Norfolk, by a journey of three days, passing through Cambridge without stopping there. In the evening of the first day they rested at the village of Eaton, near St. Neot's. Cowper walked with his young kinsman in the church-yard by moon-light, and spoke of the poet Thomson with more composure of mind than he had discovered for many months.

This conversation was almost his last glimmering of cheerfulness.

At North-Tuddenham the travellers were accommodated with a commodious, untenanted parsonage-house, by the kindness of the Revd. Leonard Shelford. Here they resided till the nineteenth of August. It was the considerate intention of Mr. Johnson not to remove the two invalides immediately to his own house, in the town of East-Dereham, lest the situation in a market-place, should be distressing to the tender spirits of Cowper.

In their new temporary residence they were received by Miss Johnson, and Miss Perowne; and

here I am irresistibly led to remark the kindness of Providence towards Cowper, in his darkest seasons of calamity, by supplying him with attendants peculiarly suited to the exigencies of mental dejection.

Miss Perowne is one of those excellent beings, whom nature seems to have formed expressly for the purpose of alleviating the sufferings of the afflicted: tenderly vigilant in providing for the wants of sickness, and resolutely firm in adminstering such relief as the most intelligent compassion can supply. Cowper speedily observed and felt the invaluable virtues of his new attendant, and during the last years of his life he honoured her so far, as to prefer her personal assistance to that of every individual around him.

Severe as his depressive malady appeared at this period, he was still able to bear considerable exercise, and before he left Tuddenham, he walked with Mr. Johnson to the neighbouring village of Mattishall, on a visit to his cousin, Mrs. Bodham. On surveying his own portrait by Abbot, in the house of that lady, he clasped his hands in a paroxysm of pain, and uttered a vehement wish, that his present sensations might be such as they were when that picture was painted.

In August 1795, Mr. Johnson conducted his two invalides to Mundsley, a village on the Norfolk coast, in the hope, that a situation by the sea-side might prove salutary and amusing to Cowper. They continued to reside there till October, but without any apparent benefit to the health of the interesting sufferer.

He had long relinquished epistolary intercourse with his most intimate friends, but his tender solicitude to hear some tidings of his favourite Weston induced him in September, to write a Letter to Mr. Buchanan. It shews the severity of his depression, but shews also, that faint gleams of pleasure could occasionally break through the settled darkness of melancholy.

He begins with a poetical quotation.

" To interpose a little ease,
Let my frail thoughts dally with false surmize !"

" I will forget, for a moment, that to whomsoever I may address myself, a Letter from me can no otherwise be welcome, than as a curiosity. To you, Sir, I address this; urged to it by extreme penury

of employment, and the desire I feel to learn something of what is doing, and has been done, at Weston, (my beloved Weston!) since I left it.

"The coldness of these blasts, even in the hottest days, has been such, that added to the irritation of the salt-spray, with which they are always charged, they have occasioned me an inflammation in the eye-lids, which threatened a few days since to confine me entirely, but by absenting myself as much as possible from the beach, and guarding my face with an umbrella, that inconvenience is in some degree abated. My chamber commands a very near view of the ocean, and the ships at high water approach the coast so closely, that a man furnished with better eyes than mine, might, I doubt not, discern the sailors from the window. No situation, at least when the weather is clear, and bright, can be pleasanter; which you will easily credit, when I add, that it imparts something a little resembling pleasure even to me.—Gratify me with news of Weston! If Mr. Gregson, and your neighbours the Courtenays are there, mention me to them in such terms as you see good. Tell me if my poor birds are living! I never see the herbs I used to give them, without a recollection of them, and sometimes am ready to ga-

ther them, forgeting that I am not at home. Pardon this instrusion !

" Mrs. Unwin continues much as usual.

" Mundsley, Sept. 5, 1795."

The compassionate and accomplished clergyman, to whom this Letter is addressed, endeavoured, with great tenderness and ingenuity, to allure his dejected friend to prolong a correspondence, that seemed to promise some little alleviation to his melancholy ; but that cruel distemper baffled all the various expedients that could be devised to counteract its overwhelming influence.

Much hope was entertained from air and exercise, with a frequent change of scene.——In September, Mr. Johnson conducted his kinsman (to the promotion of whose recovery he devoted all the faculties of his affectionate spirit) to take a survey of Dunham-Lodge, a seat that happened to be vacant ; it is situated on high ground, in a park, about four miles from Swaffham. Cowper spoke of it as a house rather too spacious for him, yet such as he was not unwilling to

inhabit. A remark which induced Mr. Johnson at a subsequent period, to become the tenant of this mansion, as a scene more eligible for Cowper, than the town of Dereham.——This town they also surveyed in their excursion; and after passing a night there, returned to Mundsley, which they quitted for the season on the seventh of October.

They removed immediately to Dereham; but left it in the course of a month for Dunham-Lodge, which now became their settled residence.

The spirits of Cowper were not sufficiently revived to allow him to resume either his pen or his books; but the kindness of his young kinsman continued to furnish him with inexhaustible amusement, by reading to him, almost incessantly, a series of novels, which, although they did not lead him to converse on what he heard, yet failed not to rivet his attention; and so to prevent his afflicted mind from preying on itself.

In April 1796, the good, infirm old lady, whose infirmities continued to engage the tender attention of Cowper, even in his darkest periods of depression, received a visit from her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Powley. On their departure, Mr. Johnson assumed the office which Mrs.

Powley had tenderly performed for her venerable parent, and regularly read a chapter in the Bible every morning to Mrs. Unwin before she rose. It was the invariable custom of Cowper to visit his poor old friend the moment he had finished his breakfast, and to remain in her apartment while the chapter was read.

In June the pressure of his melancholy appeared in some degree alleviated, for on Mr. Johnson's receiving the edition of Pope's Homer published by Mr. Wakefield, Cowper eagerly seized the book, and began to read the notes to himself with visible interest. They awakened his attention to his own version of Homer. In August he deliberately engaged in a revisal of the whole, and for some time produced almost sixty new lines a day.

This mental occupation animated all his intimate friends with a most lively hope of his speedy and perfect recovery. But autumn repressed the hope that summer had excited.

In September the family removed from Dunham-Lodge to try again the influence of the sea-side, in their favourite village of Mundsley.

Cowper walked frequently by the sea; but no apparent benefit arose, no mild relief from the inces-

sant pressure of melancholy. He had relinquished his Homer again, and could not yet be induced to resume it.

Towards the end of October this interesting family of disabled invalides, and their affectionate attendants, retired from the coast to the house of Mr. Johnson in Dereham. A house now chosen for their winter residence, as Dunham-Lodge appeared to them too dreary.

The long and exemplary life of Mrs. Unwin was drawing towards a close :—The powers of nature were gradually exhausted, and on the seventeenth of December she ended a troubled existence, distinguished by a sublime spirit of piety and friendship, that shone through long periods of calamity, and continued to glimmer through the distressful twilight of her declining faculties. Her death was uncommonly tranquil. Cowper saw her about half an hour before the moment of expiration, which passed without a struggle, or a groan, as the clock was striking one in the afternoon.

On the morning of that day, he said to the servant who opened the window of his chamber :—— " Sally, is there life above stairs ?"—A striking proof of his bestowing incessant attention on the sufferings

of his aged friend, although he had long appeared almost totally absorbed in his own.

In the dusk of the evening he attended Mr. Johnson to survey the corpse; and after looking at it a few moments, he started suddenly away, with a vehement, but unfinished, sentence of passionate sorrow.

He spoke of her no more.

She was buried by torch-light, on the twenty-third of December, in the north aisle of Dereham church; and two of her friends, impressed with a just and deep sense of her extraordinary merit have raised a marble tablet to her memory with the following inscription,

IN MEMORY OF

MARY,

WIDOW OF THE REVD. MORLEY UNWIN,

AND

MOTHER OF THE REVD. WILLIAM CAWTHORN UNWIN,

Born at ELY 1724,

BURIED IN THIS CHURCH 1796.

Trusting in God, with all her heart and mind,
This woman prov'd magnanimously kind;
Endur'd affliction's desolating hail,
And watch'd a poet thro' misfortune's vale.
Her spotless dust, angelic guards, defend!
It is the dust of Unwin, Cowper's friend!
That single title in itself is fame,
For all, who read his verse, revere her name.

The infinitely tender and deep sense of gratitude that Cowper, in his seasons of health, invariably manifested towards this zealous and faithful guardian of his troubled existence, the agonies he suffered on our finding her under the oppression of a paralytic disease, during my first visit to Weston; and all his expressions to me concerning the comfort and support that his spirits had derived from her friendship, all made me peculiarly anxious to know, how he sustained the event of her death. It may be regarded as an instance of providential mercy to this afflicted poet, whose sensibility of heart, was so wonderfully acute, that his aged friend, whose life

he had so long considered as essential to his own, was taken from him at a time, when the pressure of his malady, a perpetual low fever, both of body and mind, had in a great degree diminised the native energy of his faculties and affections.

Severe as the sufferings of melancholy were to his disordered frame, I am strongly inclined to believe, that the anguish of heart which he would otherwise have endured, must have been infinitely more severe. From this anguish he was so far preserved by the marvellous state of his own disturbed health, that instead of mourning the loss of a person, in whose life he had seemed to live, all perception of that loss was mercifully taken from him, and from the moment when he hurried away from the inanimate object of his filial attachment, he appeared to have no memory of her having existed, for he never asked a question concerning her funeral, nor ever mentioned her name.

Towards the summer of 1797, his bodily health appeared to improve, but not to such a degree as to restore any comfortable activity to his mind. In June he wrote to me a brief Letter, but such as too forcibly expressed the cruelty of his distemper.

The process of digestion never passed regularly in his frame during the years that he resided in Norfolk. Medicine appeared to have little or no influence on his complaint, and his aversion at the sight of it was extreme,

From asses' milk, of which he began a course on the 21st of June in this year, he gained a considerable acquisition of bodily strength, and was enabled to bear an airing in an open carriage, before breakfast, with Mr. Johnson.

A depression of spirits, which suspended the studies of a writer so eminently endeared to the public, was considered by men of piety and learning as a national misfortune, and several individuals of this description, though personally unknown to Cowper, wrote to him in the benevolent hope that expressions of friendly praise, from persons who could be influenced only by the most laudable motives in bestowing it, might re-animate the dejected spirit of a poet not sufficiently conscious of the public service that his writings had rendered to his country, and of that universal esteem whtch they had so deservedly secured to their author.

I cannot think myself authorised to mention the names of all who did honour to Cowper, and to

themselves, on this occasion, but I trust the Bishop of Landaff will forgive me, if my sentiments of personal regard towards him, induce me to take an affectionate liberty with his name, and to gratify myself by recording, in these pages, a very pleasing example of his liberal attention to the interests of humanity.

He endeavoured evangelically to chear and invigorate the mind of Cowper, but the depression of that disordered mind, was the effect of bodily disorder so obstinate, that it received not the slightest relief, from what, in a season of corporeal health, would have afforded the most animated gratification to this interesting invalide.

The pressure of his malady had now made him utterly deaf to the most honourable praise.

He had long discontinued the revisal of his Homer, but by the entreaty of his young kinsman he was persuaded to resume it in September 1797, and he presevered in it, oppressed as he was by indisposition, till March 1799.——On Friday evening the eighth of that month, he completed his revisal of the Odyssey, and the next morning wrote part of a new Preface.

To watch over the disordered health of afflicted genius, and to lead a powerful, but oppressed,

spirit by gentle encouragement, to exert itself in salutary occupation, is anoffice that requires a very rare union of tenderness, intelligence, and fortitude. To contemplate, and minister to a great mind in a state that borders on mental desolation, is like surveying, in the midst of a desert, the tottering ruins of palaces and temples, where the faculties of the spectator are almost absorbed in wonder, and regret, and where every step taken with awful apprehension.

It seemed as if Providence had expressly formed the young kinsman of Cowper to prove exactly such a guardian to his declining years, as the peculiar exigencies of his situation required. I never saw the human being that could, I think, have sustained the delicate and arduous office (in which the inexhaustible virtues of Mr. Johnson persevered to the last) through a period so long, with an equal portion of unvaried tenderness, and unshaken fidelity. A man who wanted sensibility, would have renounced the duty; and a man, endowed with a particle too much of that valuable, though perilous, quality, must have felt his own health utterly undermined, by an excess of sympathy with the sufferings perpetually in his sight. Mr. Johnson has completely discharged, perhaps, the most trying of human duties;

and I trust he will forgive me for this public declaration, that in his mode of discharging it, he has merited the most cordial esteem from all, who love the memory of Cowper. Even a stranger may consider it as a strong proof of his tender dexterity in soothing and guiding the afflicted poet, that he was able to engage him steadily to pursue and finish the revisal and correction of his Homer, during a long period of bodily and mental sufferings, when his troubled mind recoiled from all intercourse with his most intimate friends, and laboured under a morbid abhorrence of all chearful exertion.

But in deploring the calamity of my friend, and describing the merit of his affectionate attendant, I must not forget that it is still incumbent on me, as a faithful biographer, to notice a few circumstances in the dark and distressful years that Cowper had yet to linger on earth. In the summer of 1798, Mr. Johnson was induced to vary his plan of remaining for some months in the marine village of Mundsley, and thought it more eligible for the invalide to make frequent visits from Dereham to the coast, passing a week at a time by the sea-side.

Cowper, in his poem on Retirement, seems to inform us what his own sentiments were, in a season

of health, concerning the regimen most proper for the disease of melancholy.

> Virtuous and faithful Heberden, whose skill
> Attempts no task it cannot well fulfil,
> Gives melancholy up to nature's care,
> And sends the patient into purer air.

The frequent change of place, and the magnificence of marine scenery, produced at times a little relief to his depressive sensations. On the 7th of June, 1798, he surveyed the light-house at Happisburgh, and expressed some pleasure on beholding, through a telescope several ships at a distance. Yet in his usual walk with Mr. Johnson by the sea-side, he exemplified, but too forcibly, his own affecting description of melancholy silence.

> That silent tongue
> Could give advice, could censure, or commend,
> Or charm the sorrows of a drooping friend;
> Renounc'd alike its office, and its sport,
> Its brisker and its graver strains fall short:
> Both fail beneath a fever's secret sway,
> And like a summer-brook, are past away.

But this description is applicable only in the more

oppressive preceding years, for of the summer 1798, Mr. Johnson says——" We had no longer air " and exercise alone, but exercise and Homer hand " in hand."

On the twenty-fourth of July, Cowper had the honour of a visit from a lady, for whom he had long entertained affectionate respect, the Dowager Lady Spencer——and it was rather remarkable, that on the very morning she called upon him, he happened to have begun his revisal of the Odyssey, which he had originally inscribed to her. Such an incident in a happier season, would have produced a very enlivening effect on his spirits; but, in his present state, it had not even the power to lead him into any free conversation with his amiable visitor.

The only amusement that he appeared to admit without reluctance, was the reading of Mr. Johnson, who, indefatigable in the supply of such amusement, had exhausted an immense collection of novels; and at this period began reading to the poet his own works. To these he listened also in silence, and heard all his poems recited in order, till the reader arrived at the history of John Gilpin, which he begged not to hear. Mr. Johnson proceed-

ed to his manuscript poems:——To these he willingly listened, but made not a single remark on any.

In October 1798, the pressure of his melancholy seemed to be mitigated in some little degree, for he exerted himself so far as to write, without solicitation, to Lady Hesketh; and I insert passages of this Letter, because, gloomy as it is, it describes in a most interesting manner, the sudden attack of his malady, and tends to confirm an opinion, that his mental disorder arose from a scorbutic habit, which, when his perspiration was obstructed, occasioned an unsearchable obstruction in the finer parts of his frame. Such a cause would produce, I apprehend, an effect exactly like what my suffering friend describes in this affecting Letter.

DEAR COUSIN,

You describe, delightful scenes, but you describe them to one, who, if he even saw them, could receive no delight from them: who has a faint recollection, and so faint, as to be like an almost forgotten dream, that once he was susceptible of pleasure from such causes. The country that you

have had in prospect, has been always famed for its beauties; but the wretch who can derive no gratification from a view of nature, even under the disadvantage of her most ordinary dress, will have no eyes to admire her in any.

In one day, in one minute, I should rather have said, she became an universal blank to me, and though from a different cause, yet with an effect as difficult to remove, as blindness itself.

* * * * * * *

Mundsley, October 13, 1798.

On his return from Mundsley to Dereham, in an evening towards the end of October, Cowper, with Miss Perowne, and Mr. Johson, was overturned in a post chaise:——He discovered no terror on the occasion, and escaped without injury from the accident.

In December he received a visit from his highly esteemed friend, Sir John Throckmorton, but

his malady was at that time so oppressive, that it rendered him almost insensible to the kind solicitude of friendship.

He still continued to exercise the powers of his astonishing mind; upon his finishing the revisal of his Homer, in March 1799, Mr. Johnson endeavoured in the gentlest manner to lead him into new literary occupation.

For this purpose on the eleventh of March he laid before him the paper containing the commencment of his poem on *The Four Ages.* Cowper altered a few lines; he also added a few, but soon observed to his kind attendant——" That it was too " great a work for him to attempt in his present " situation."

At supper Mr. Johnson suggested to him several literary projects, that he might execute more easily. He replied——" That he had just thought of " six Latin verses, and if he could compose any thing " it must be in pursuing that composition."

The next worning he wrote the six verses he had mentioned, and added a few more, entitling the poem, *Montes Glaciales.*

It proved a versification of a circumstance recorded in a news-paper, which had been read to him

a few weeks before, without his appearing to notice it. This poem he translated into English verse, on the nineteenth of March, to oblige Miss Perowne. Both the original and the translation appear in the Appendix.

On the twentieth of March he wrote the stanzas entitled *The Cast-away,* founded on an anecdote in Anson's voyage, which his memory suggested to him, although he had not looked into the book for many years.

As this poem is the last original production from the pen of Cowper, I shall introduce it here, persuaded that it will be read with an interest proportioned to the extraordinary pathos of the subject, and the still more extraordinary powers of the poet, whose lyre could sound so forcibly, unsilenced by the gloom of the darkest distemper, that was conducting him, by slow gradations, to the shadow of death.

THE

CAST-AWAY.

Obscurest night involv'd the sky;
Th' Atlantic billows roar'd,
When such a destin'd wretch as I,
Wash'd headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
Than he, with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast,
With warmer wishes sent.
He lov'd them both, but both in vain,
Nor him behold, nor her again.

Not long beneath the 'whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay;
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away;
But wag'd with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted: nor his friends had fail'd
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevail'd,
That, pitiless per force,
They left their out-cast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford;
And, such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delay'd not to bestow.
But he (they knew) nor ship, nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor cruel, as it seem'd, could he
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them;
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld:
And so long he, with unspent pow'r,
His destiny repell'd:
And ever, as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cry'd—"Adieu!"

At length, his transient respite past,
His comrades, who before
Had heard his voice in ev'ry blast,
Could catch the sound no more.
For then, by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him: but the page
Of narrative sincere,
That tells his name, his worth, his age,
Is wet with Anson's tear.
And tears by bards or heroes shed,
Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
Descanting on his fate!
To give the melancholy theme
A more enduring date,
But misery still delights to trace
Its 'semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allay'd,
No light propitious shone;
When, snatch'd from all effectual aid,
We perish'd, each alone;
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelm'd in deeper gulphs than he.

In August he translated this poem into Latin verse. In October he went with Miss Perowne, and Mr. Johnson, to survey a larger house in Dereham, which he preferred to their present residence, and in which the family were settled in the following December.

Though his corporeal strength was now evidently declining, the tender persuasion of Mr. Johnson induced him to amuse his mind with frequent composition. Between August and December, he wrote all the translations from various Latin and Greek epigrams, which the reader will find in the Appendix.

In his new residence, he amused himself with translating a few fables of Gay into Latin verse. The fable which he used to recite when a child—"The Hare and many Friends"—became one of his latest amusements.

The perfect ease, and spirit, with which his translations from Gay are written, induce me to print not only those, which he left entire, but even the two verses (for they are excellent) with which he was beginning to translate another, when encreasing maladies obliged him to relinquish for ever this elegant occupation.

These Latin fables were all written in January 1800. Towards the end of that month I had requested him to new model a passage in his Homer, relating to some figures of Dædalus; on the thirty-first of January I received from him his improved version of the lines in question, written in a firm and delicate hand.

The sight of such writing from my long silent friend, inspired me with a lively, but too sanguine hope, that I might see him once more restored.

Alas! at this period a complication of new maladies began to threaten his inestimable life; and the neat transcript of his improved verses on the curious monument of antient sculpture, so gracefully described by Homer, verses, which I surveyed as a delightful omen of future letters from a correspondent so inexpressibly dear to me, proved the last effort his pen.

On the very day that this endearing mark of his kindness reached me, a dropsical appearance in his legs induced Mr. Johnson to have recourse to fresh medical assistance. The beloved invalide was with great difficulty persuaded to take the remedies prescribed, and to try the exercise of a post-chaise,

an exercise, which he could not bear beyond the twenty-second of February.

In March, when his decline became more and more striking, he was visited by Mr. Rose. He hardly expressed any pleasure on the arrival of a friend, whom he had so long and so tenderly regarded, yet he shewed evident signs of regret on his departure, the sixth of April.

The long calamitous illness, and impending death of a darling child, precluded me from sharing with Mr. Rose the painful gratification of seeing, once more, the man, whose genius, and virtues, we had once contemplated together, with mutual veneration and delight; whose approaching dissolution we felt, not only as an irreparable loss to ourselves, but as a national misfortune. On the nineteenth of April the close of a life so wonderfully chequered, and so universally interesting, appeared to be very near.

On Sunday the twentieth, he seemed a little revived.

On Monday he appeared dying, but recovered so much as to eat a slight dinner.

Tuesday and Wednesday he grew apparently weaker every hour.

On Thursday he sat up as usual in the evening.

Friday the twenty-fifth, at five in the morning, a deadly change appeared in his features.

He spoke no more.

His last words were uttered in the night :—In rejecting a cordial, he said to Miss Perowne, who had presented it to him—" What can it signify ?" Yet, even at this time, he did not seem impressed with any idea of dying, although he conceived, that nothing would contribute to his health.

The deplorable inquietude and darkness of his latter years were mercifully terminated by a most gentle and tranquil dissolution. He passed through the awful moments of death so mildly, that although five persons were present, and observing him, in his chamber, not one of them perceived him to expire; but he had ceased to breathe about five minutes before five in the afternoon.

On Saturday, the third of May, he was buried in a part of Dereham church, called St. Edmund's chapel, and the funeral was attended by several of his relations.

He died intestate: his affectionate relation, the Lady Hesketh, has fulfilled the office of his administratrix, and raised a marble tablet to his memory, where his ashes repose, with the following inscription:

IN MEMORY

OF

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQR.

BORN IN HERTFORDSHIRE,

1731.

BURIED IN THIS CHURCH,

1800.

Ye, who with warmth the public triumph feel
Of talents, dignified by sacred zeal.
Here, to devotion's bard devoutly just,
Pay your fond tribute due to Cowper's dust!
England, exulting in his spotless fame,
Ranks with her dearest sons his favourite name:
Sense, fancy, wit, suffice not all to raise
So clear a title to affection's praise;
His highest honours to the heart belong;
His virtues form'd the magic of his song.

In the metropolis, I trust, the just affection of our enlightened country for an author, so eminently deserving, will in some future period more favourable to works of peace, devise the means of erecting a cenotaph in his honour, suitable to the dignity of his poetical character, and to the liberality of the nation, that may be justly proud of expressing a parental sense of his merit.

I have regarded my own intimacy with him as a blessing to myself, and the remembrance of it is now endeared to me by the hope that it may enable me to delineate the man and the poet, with such fidelity and truth, as may render his remote, and even his future, admirers minutely acquainted with an exemplary being, most worthy to be intimately known, and universally beloved.

The person and mind of Cowper seem to have been formed with equal kindness by nature, and it may be questioned if she ever bestowed on any man, with a fonder prodigality, all the requisites to conciliate affection, and to inspire respect.

From his figure, as it first appeared to me in his sixty-second year, I should imagine that he must have been very comely in his youth; and little had time injured his countenance, since his features expressed at that period of life all the powers of his mind, and all the sensibility of his heart:

He was of a middle stature, rather strong than delicate in the form of his limbs; the colour of his hair was a light brown, that of his eyes a blueish grey, and his complexion ruddy. In his dress he was neat, but not finical; in his diet temperate, and not dainty.

He had an air of pensive reserve in his deportment, and his extreme shyness sometimes produced in his manners an indescribable mixture of awkwardness and dignity; but no being could be more truly graceful, when he was in perfect health, and perfectly pleased with his society. Towards women in particular, his behaviour and conversation were delicate, and fascinating in the highest degree.

Nature had given him a warm constitution, and had he been prosperous in early love, it is probable that he might have enjoyed a more uniform and happy tenor of health. But a disappointment of the heart, arising from the cruelty of fortune, threw a

cloud on his juvenile spirit. Thwarted in love, the native fire of his temperament turned impetuously into the kindred channel of devotion. The smothered flames of desire, uniting with the vapours of constitutional melancholy, and the fervency of religious zeal, produced altogether that irregularity of corporeal sensation, and of mental health, which gave such extraordinary vicissitudes of splendour, and of darkness, to his mortal career, and made Cowper at times an idol of the purest admiration, and at times an object of the sincerest pity.

As a sufferer, indeed, no man could be more entitled to compassion, for no man was ever more truly compassionate to the sufferings of others. It was that rare portion of benevolent sensibility in his nature, which endeared him to persons of all ranks, who had opportunities of observing him in private life. The great Prince of Condé used to say—"No man is a hero to his familiar domestic;"—But Cowper was really more. He was beloved and revered with a sort of idolatry in his family; not from any romantic ideas of his magical powers as a poet, but from that evangelical gentleness of manners, and purity of conduct, which illuminated the shade of his sequestered life.

I may be suspected of speaking with the fond partiality, the unperceived exaggerations of friendship; but the fear of such censure shall not deter me from bearing my most deliberate testimony to the excellence of him, whose memory I revere, and saying, that as a man, he made, of all men whom I have ever had opportunities to observe so minutely, the nearest approaches to moral perfection. Indeed a much more experienced judge of mankind, and Cowper's associate in early life, Lord Thurlow, has expressed the same idea of his character; for being once requested to describe him, he replied with that solemn energy of dignified elocution, by which he is accustomed to give a very forcible effect to a few simple words——"Cowper is truly a good man."

His daily habits of study and exercise, his whole domestic life is so minutely and agreeably delineated in the series of his Letters that it is unnecessary for his biographer to expatiate upon them. I have little occasion indeed to dwell on this topic, but let me apply to my young readers a few expressive words of Louis Racine, in addressing to his own son the life and letters of his illustrious father,—— "*Quand*

" *vous l' aurez connu dans sa famille, vous le gouterez* " *mieux, lorsque vous viendrez à le connoitre sur le* " *Parnasse : vous scaurez, pourquoi ses vers sont tou-* " *jours pleins de sentimens.*"—I might add, in alluding to a few of his most tender and pathetic letters: " *C'est une simplicitè de mœurs si admirable dans un* " *homme tout sentiment, et tout cœur, qui est cause,* " *qu'en copiant pour vous ses lettres, je verse à tous* " *momens des larmes, parcequ'il me communique la* " *tendresse, dont it etoit rempli.*"—Cowper greatly resembled his eminent and exemplary brothers of Parnassus, Racine and Metastasio, in the simplicity and tenderness of his domèstic character.

His voice conspired with his features to announce to all who saw and heard him, the extreme sensibility of his heart; and in reading aloud he furnished the chief delight of those social, enchanting winter evenings, which he has described so happily in the fourth book of the Task. He had been taught by his parents at home to recite English verse, in the early years of his childhood; and acquired considerable applause, as a child, in the recital of Gay's popular fable—The Hare snd many Friends.—A circumstance, that probably had great influence in raising his passion for poetry, and in giving him a pecu-

liar fondness for the wild persecuted animal that he converted into a very grateful domestic companion.

Secluded from the world, as Cowper had long been, he yet retained in advanced life uncommon talents for conversation; and his conversation was distinguished by mild and benevolent pleasantry, by delicate humour peculiar to himself, or by a higher tone of serious good-sense, and those united charms of a cultivated mind, which he has himself very happily described in drawing the colloquial character of a venerable divine.

> Grave, without dullness, learned without pride;
> Exact, yet not precise: tho' meek, keen-eyed;
> Who, when occasion justified its use,
> Had wit, as bright as ready, to produce;
> Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
> Or from philosophy's enlightened page,
> His rich materials, and regale your ear
> With strains, it was a privilege to hear:
> Yet above all, his luxury supreme,
> And his chief glory was the gospel theme:
> Ambitious not to shine, or to excel,
> But to treat justly, what he lov'd so well.

Men who withdraw themselves from the ordinary forms of society, whether delicacy of health, or a passion for study, or both united, occasion their retirement from the world, are generally obliged to pay a heavy tax for the privacy they enjoy, in having their habits of life, and their temper, very darkly misrepresented by the ignorant malice of offended pride. The sweetness and purity of Cowper's real character did not perfectly preserve him from such misrepresentations. Many persons have been misled so far as to suppose him a severe, and sour sectary, though gentleness and good-nature were among his pre-eminent qualities, and though he was deliberately attached to the established religion of his country. The reader may recollect a Letter to his young kinsman, who was then on the point of taking orders, in which Cowper sufficiently proves his attachment to the Church of England; and he speaks so decidedly on the subject, that certainly none of the sectaries have a right to reckon him in their number. He was, however, as his poetry has most elegantly testified, a most ardent friend to liberty, both civil and religious; and his love of freedom induced him to animadvert with lively indignation on every officious and oppressive exercise of epis-

copal authority. Few ministers of the gospel have searched the Scripture more diligently than Cowper; and in his days of health, with a happier effect; for a spirit of evangelical kindness and purity pervaded the whole tenor of his language, and all the conduct of his life.

His infinite good-nature, as a literary man, is strikingly displayed in the indulgent condescension with which he gratified two successive clerks of Northampton, in writing for them their annual copies of mortuary verses. He thought, like the amiable Plutarch, that the most ordinary office may be dignified by a benevolent spirit.

In describing himself to his amiable friend Mr. Park, the engraver, he spoke too slightingly of his own learning, for he was in truth a scholar, as any man may fairly be called who is master of four languages, besides his own. Cowper read Greek and Latin, French and Italian; but the extraordinary incidents of his life precluded him from indulging himself in a multiplicity of books, and his reading was conformable to the rule of Pliny——"*Non multa, sed multum.*

He had devoted some time to the pencil, and he mentions his reason for quitting it in the folow-

lowing passage of a Letter to the same correspondent.

Weston, 1792.

It was only one year that I gave to drawing, for I found it an employment hurtful to my eyes, which have always been weak and subject to inflammation. I finished my attempts in this way with three small landscapes, which I presented to a lady. These may perhaps exist, but I have now no correspondence with the fair proprietor. Except these there is nothing remaining to shew that I ever aspired to such an accomplishment.

The native warmth of Cowper's affections led him to take a particular pleasure in recording the merit with which he was personally acquainted: a remarkable instance of this amiable disposition appears in his condescending to translate the Latin epitaph on his school-master, Dr. Lloyd. This epitaph, with Cowper's version, and his remark upon it, my reader may find in the Appendix; another epitaph on his Uncle, Mr. Ashley Cowper, I shall insert here, as it

displays, in a most pleasing point of view, both the affectionate ardour, and the modesty of its author.

LINES,

COMPOSED FOR A MEMORIAL

OF

ASHLEY COWPER, Esqr.

Immediately after his death,

BY

HIS NEPHEW, WILLIAM OF WESTON.

Farewell! endued with all, that could engage
All hearts to love thee, both in youth and age!
In prime of life, for sprightliness enroll'd
Among the gay, yet virtuous as the old;
In life's last stage, (Oh blessing rarely found!)
Pleasant as youth, with all its blossoms crown'd;
Through every period of this changeful state
Unchang'd thyself! wise, good, affectionate!

Marble may flatter, and lest this should seem
O'ercharg'd with praises on so dear a theme,
Although thy worth be more than half supprest,
Love shall be satisfied, and veil the rest.

The person whom these verses commemorate, was himself an elegant poet, and father to the lady, to whom so many of Cowper's Letters are addressed in the preceding collection. The reader can hardly fail to recollect the very pathetic manner, in which the poet spoke to the daughter of this gentleman on the death of a parent so justly beloved.

In describing the social and friendly faculties of Cowper, it would be unjust not to bestow particular notice on a talent, that he possessed in perfection, and one, that friendship ought especially to honour, as she is indebted to it for a considerable portion of her most valuable delights, I mean the talent of writing Letters.

Melmoth, the elegant translator of Pliny's Letters, has observed, in an interesting note to the thirteenth Letter of the second book, how highly the art of epistolary writing was esteemed by the Romans, lamenting at the same time, that our country has not distinguished itself in this branch of literature.

My late accomplished friend Dr. Warton has also remarked in his Life of Pope, that "in the various sorts of composition in which the English have excelled, we have perhaps the least claim to ex-

" cellence in the article of Letters, of our celebrated " countrymen."

Those of Pope are generally thought deficient in that air of perfect ease, that unstudied flow of affection, which gives the highest charm to epistolary writing; but those unaffected graces, which the delicate critic wished in vain to find in the Letters of Pope, may be found abundant, and complete, in the various correspondence of Cowper. He was indeed a being of such genuine simplicity and tenderness, so absolute a stranger to artifice and disguise; his affections were so ardent, and so pure, that in writing to those he loved, he could not fail to shew, what really passed in his own bosom, and his Letters are most faithful representatives of his heart. He could never subscribe to that dangerous, and sophistical dogma of Dr. Johnson, in his splenetic disquisition on the Letters of Pope, that "friendship has no tendency to secure veracity."

It certainly has such a tendency, and in proportion to the sense, and the goodness of the writer; for a sensible, and a good man must rather wish to afford his bosom friend the most accurate knowledge of his real character, than to obtain a precarious increase of regard by any sort of illusion. The great

charm of confidential epistolary intercourse to such a man, arises from the persuasion that veracity is not dangerous in speaking of his own defects, when he is speaking to a true. and a considerate friend.

The letters not intended for the eye of the public have generally obtained the greatest share of popular applause; and for this reason, because such letters display no profusion of studied ornaments, but abound in the simple and powerful attractions of nature and truth.

Letters indeed will ever please, when they are frank, confidential conversations on paper between persons of well-principled and highly cultivated minds, of graceful manners, and of tender affections.

The language of such letters must of course have that mixture of ease and elegance peculiarly suited to such composition, and most happily exemplified in the Letters of Cicero and of Cowper. These two great masters of a perfect epistolary style have both mentioned their own excellent and simple rule for attaining it—to use only the language of familiar conversation.

Cowper's opinion of two English writers, much admired for the style of their letters, is expressed in the following extract from one of his own to Mr. Hill.

" I have been reading Gray's works, and think him sublime. * * * * I once thought Swift's letters the best that could be written, but I like Gray's better. His humour, or his wit, or whatever it is to be called, is never ill-natured or offensive, and yet I think equally poignant with the Dean's."

The letters of Gray are admirable, but they appear to me not equal to those of Cowper, either in the graces of simplicity, or in the warmth of affection.

The very sweet stanzas that he has written on Friendship, would be alone sufficient to prove, that his heart and spirit were most tenderly alive to all the duties, and all the delights, of that inestimable connexion. He was indeed such a friend himself, as the voice of wisdom describes, in calling a true friend, " The Medicine of Life: and though misfortune precluded him, in his early days, from the enjoyments of connubial love, and of professional prosperity, he may be esteemed as singularly happy in this very important consolatory privilege of human existence; particularly in his friendships with that finer part of the creation, whose sensibility makes them most able to

relish, or to call forth the powers of diffident genius, and to alleviate the pressure of mental affliction. It may be questioned, if any poet, on the records of Parnassus, ever enjoyed a confidential intimacy, as Cowper did, with a variety of accomplished women, maintaining at the same time consummate innocence of conduct.

Pre-eminent as he was, in warmth, and vigour of fancy and affection, the quickness and strength of his understanding were proportioned to the more perilous endowments of his mind. Though he had received from nature lively appetites and passions, his reason held them in the most steady and laudable subjection.

The only internal enemy of his peace and happiness, that his intellect could not subdue, was one tremendous idea, mysteriously impressed on his fervent imagination in a scene of bodily disorder, and at such periods recurring upon his mind with an overwhelming influence, which not all the admirable powers of his own innocent upright spirit, nor all the united aids of art and nature, were able to counteract.

Though he was sometimes subject to imaginary fears, he maintained, in his season of health, a most magnanimous reliance on the kindess of Heaven. This

sublime sentiment is forcibly and beautifully expressed in the following passage, extracted from his correspondence with Mr. Hill.

"I suppose you are sometimes troubled on my account, but you need not. I have no doubt that it will be seen, when my days are closed, that I served a Master who would not suffer me to want any thing that was good for me. He said to Jacob, "I will surely do thee good;"—and this he said not for his sake only, but for ours also, if we trust in him. This thought relieves me from the greatest part of the distress I should else suffer in my present circumstances, and enables me to sit down peacefully upon the wreck of my fortune."

He also possessed, and exerted, that becoming fortitude, which teaches a man to support, under various trials, the sober respect that he owes to himself: Praise, however exalted, did not intoxicate him, and detraction was unable to poison his pure sense of his merit; so that he thus escaped an infirmity into which some great and good poets have fallen; an infirmity, that was remarkable in Racine, and which I had once occasion to observe, and lament, in a very eminent

departed author of our own country, who complained to me, that time had so far depressed his spirits, as to take from him all sense of pleasure in public praise, and yet left him acute feelings of pain from public detraction.

Cowper possessed, in his original motives for appearing in the character of a poet, the best possible preservative against this double infelicity of mind,

His predominant desire was to render his poetry an instrument of good to mankind: his love of fame was a secondary passion, and like all his passions in perfect subjection to the great principles of religious duty, which he made the rule of his life. Yet he often lamented the ordinary malevolence of periodical criticism, as a disgrace to literature. His sentiments on this subject appear in the following passage of a Letter to Mr. Johnson.

" That extreme bitterness of censure, which I have so often observed in Reviews, and which nothing less than the immoral tendency of any work could at all justify, has frequently given me great disgust, and I doubt not that it has operated as a restraint, if not on the press, at least on the pen of many a modest man, as

certainly and effectually as any prohibitory law could have done."

He looked however, with a noble contempt on such malignity, when he saw it displayed against himself, and he pleased himself with the just idea that malice is sometimes so extravagant, as to produce an effect directly opposite to its own base intention. In speaking to the same correspondent on the various reviewers of his Homer, he expressed himself obliged by two of them, who had treated him with candour, the rest he thought, " as incompetent as unmerciful—one in particular, is abusive, as I am told (says the poet) to a degree of malignity, that will *rather serve me,* than *do me harm.*"

It is evident from the tenor of his correspondence, that he had a lively, and a proper relish for praise, when justly and affectionately bestowed. The quickness, and the nicety of his feelings, on this delicate point, he has displayed in the following Letter to a lady (whose various talents he very highly esteemed) on receiving her poem, *The Emigrants,* addressed to him in a Dedication, most worthy of such a patron.

To Mrs. CHARLOTTE SMITH.

Weston, July 25, 1793.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Many reasons concurred to make me impatient for the arrival of your most acceptable present, and among them was the fear, lest you should perhaps suspect me of tardiness in acknowledging so great a favour; a fear, that as often as it prevailed, distressed me exceedingly; at length I have received it, and my little bookseller assures me, that he sent it the very day he got it; by some mistake however, the waggon brought it instead of the coach, which occasioned a delay that I could ill afford.

It came this morning, about an hour ago; consequently I have not had time to peruse the poem, though you may be sure I have found enough for the perusal of the Dedication. I have in fact given it three readings, and in each have found encreasing pleasure.

I am a whimsical creature; when I write for the public I write of course with a desire to please, in other words to acquire fame, and I labour accord-

ingly; but when I find that I have succeeded, feel myself alarmed, and ready to shrink from the acquisition.

This I have felt more than once, and when I saw my name at the head of your Dedication, I felt it again; but the consummate delicacy of your praise soon convinced me that I might spare my blushes, and that the demand was less upon my modesty than my gratitude. Of that be assured, dear Madam, and of the truest esteem and respect of your most obliged and affectionate

Humble Servant,

W. C.

P. S.——I should have been much grieved to have let slip this opportunity of thanking you for your charming sonnets, and my two most agreeable old friends, Monimia and Orlando.

Cowper felt the full value of applause when conferred by a liberal and a powerful mind, and I

had a singularly pleasing opportunity of observing the just sensibility of his nature on this point, by carrying to him, in one of my visits to Weston, a recent news-paper, including the speech of Mr. Fox, in which that accomplished orator had given new lustre to a splendid passage of the Task, by reciting it in Parliament. The passage alluded to contains the sublime verses on the destruction of the Bastile; verses that were originally composed in the form of a prophecy. The eloquence of the poet, and of the orator united, could hardly furnish a perfect description of the double delight, which this unexpected honour afforded to the author, and to the good old enthusiastic admirer and cherisher of his talents, Mrs. Unwin. Her feelings were infinitely the most vivid on this agreeable occasion; for the poet, though he truly enjoyed such honourable applause, was ever on his guard against the perils of praise, and had continually impressed on his own devout spirit, his primary motives of poetical ambition. The mention of these motives, which conduce, as well as his extraordinary powers, to distinguish Cowper in the highest rank of illustrious poets, will naturally lead me to consider him in that point of view, and to examine

the difficulties he has surmounted, and the great aims he has accomplished, in his poetical capacity.

Accident, idleness, want, spleen, love, and the passion for fame, have all in their turns, had such occasional influence over the human faculties, as to induce men of considerable mental powers to devote themselves to the composition of verse. But the poetical character of Cowper appears to have had much nobler origin. To estimate that character according to its real dignity, we should consider him as a poet formed by the munificence of nature, and the decrees of Heaven. He seems to have received his rare poetical powers as a gift from Providence to compensate the pressure of much personal calamity, and to enable him to become, though secluded by irregular health from the worldly business, and from the ordinary pastimes of men, a singular benefactor to mankind.

If we attend to the rise and progress of his works, we shall perceive that such was the predominant aim of this truly philanthropic poet, and that in despight of his manifold impediments and troubles, Heaven graciously enabled him to accomplish the noblest purpose, that the sublimest faculties can de-

vise for their own most arduous exercise, and most delightful reward. He had cultivated his native talent for poetry in early life, although the extreme modesty of his nature had restrained him from a public display of his poetical powers. Through many years of mental disquietude and affliction, that powerful talent, which was destined to burst forth with such unrivalled lustre, seems to have remained in absolute inactivity, but in different seasons of a very long abstinence from poetical exertion, his mind had been engaged in such studies (when health allowed him to study) as form perhaps the best possible preparation for great poetical achievements: I mean a fervent application to that book, which furnishes the most ample and beneficial aliment to the heart, and to the fancy, the book to which Milton and Young were indebted for their poetical sublimity. Cowper in reading the Bible, admired and studied the eloquence of the prophets. He was particularly charmed with the energy of their language in describing the wrath of the Almighty.

By his zealous attention to the Scripture, he incessantly treasured in his own capacious mind those inexhaustible stores of sentiment and expression, which enabled him gradually to ascend the purest

heights of poetical renown, which rendered him at last, what he ardently wished to prove—the poet of Christianity—the monitor of the world!

It was after a very long and severe fit of mental depression, that by the friendly request of his faithful associate in affliction, he sought, in poetical composition of considerable extent, a salutary exercise for a mind formed for the most active, and beneficent exertion, though occasionally subject to an utter suspension of its admirable powers. I have already mentioned the circumstance communicated to me by Mrs. Unwin, concerning the first extensive poem, in point of time, that appears in the first volume of Cowper.

The Progress of Error seems the least attractive among the several admonitory poems of the collection, and we may judge from it that even the genius of Cowper required the frequent habit of writing verse to display itself to advantage. Yet even this poem, in which he is said to have made the first serious trial of his long suspended talent, has passages of exquisite beauty. Take for example, his portraits of Innocence and Folly, painted with the delicate simplicity and tenderness of Corregio.

Both baby-featur'd, and of infant size,
View'd from a distance, and with heedless eyes,
Folly and Innocence are so alike,
The diff'rence, tho' essential, fails to strike:
Yet Folly ever has a vacant stare,
A simp'ring countenance, a trifling air:
Rut Innocence, sedate, serene, erect,
Delights us by engaging our respect.

This poem also discovers, in some degree, that wonderful combination of very different powers, which the subsequent works of Cowper display in delightful profusion.

The affectionate and accomplished biographer of Burns has fallen (only I apprehend from a casual slip of memory) into a sort of silent injustice towards Cowper, when in speaking of the few poets who have at once excelled in humour, in tenderness, and in sublimity, he affirms that "this praise, in modern times, is only due to Ariosto, to Shakespeare, and perhaps to Voltaire."

Recollection, I am confident, must rapidly have convinced such a judge of poetical merit, that the works of Cowper contain many examples of that triple excellence, which is assuredly most rare, and which the masterly biographer very justly attributes to the mar-

vellous peasant, whose life and genius he has so feelingly and so honourably described. But to return to the poem of which I was speaking, it proves that Cowper could occasionally blend the moral humour of Hogarth, with the tenderness and sublimity that belong to artists of a superior rank. The portraits of the English travellers, and the foreign abbè, that are sketched in this poem, are all touched with the spirit of Hogarth.

The Progress of Error contains also some of those happy verses of serious morality, in which Cowper excelled; verses that expressing a simple truth with perfect grace and precision, rapidly fix themselves, and with a lasting proverbial influence on the memory. I will cite only two detached couplets in proof of my assertion.

> None sends his arrow to the mark in view,
> Whose hand is feeble, or his aim untrue.

> Call'd to the temple of impure delight,
> He that abstains, and he alone does right.

As soon as Cowper found that the composition of moral verse was medicinal to his mind, he seems to

have formed the noble resolution of making his works an universal medicine for the various mental infirmities of the world. His own ideas on this subject are perfectly expressed in the following passage from his first Letter to his friend Mr. Bull, who began his correspondence with the poet by a Letter of praise on the publication of his first volume.

March 24, 1782.

* * * * *

Your Letter gave me great pleasure, both as a testimony of your approbation, and of your regard, I wrote in hopes of pleasing you, and such as you, and though I must confess that, at the same time, I cast a sidelong glance at the good liking of the world at large, I believe I can say, it was more for the sake of their advantage and instruction, than their praise. They are children; if we give them physic, we must sweeten the rim of the cup with honey——if my book is so far honoured, as to be made the vehicle of true knowledge to any that are ignorant, I shall rejoice, and do already rejoice, that it has procured me a proof of your esteem.

It was probably this idea of tinging the rim of the cup with honey (an expression used by Lucretius and Tasso) which induced Cowper to place in the front of his volume the poem entitled Table-Talk. The title has in itself an inviting appearance, and the lively desultory spirit of the composition sufficiently vindicates the propriety of the title. It is a rapid and animated descant on a variety of interesting topics. The brief tale from that humourous and high-spirited Spaniard, Quevedo, is admirably told, and I have frequently heard it recited as a most striking example of Cowper's talent for such narration, by a very dear departed friend, of the most delicate discernment.

The poet in this outset of his moral enterprize, bestows a graceful compliment on his Sovereign.

> His life a lesson to the land he sways.

And judged it right to annex to this high compliment such a profession of his own independent spirit, as every ingenuous mind must delight to observe from the pen of a poet, when his life and his writings reflect a reciprocal lustre on each other.

—— —— —— a bribe!

The worth of his three kingdoms I defy
To lure me to the baseness of a lie;
And of all lies (be that one poet's boast!)
The lie that flatters, I abhor the most.

This profest abhorrence of adulation was uttered in the real spirit of simplicity and truth. No poet was ever more perfectly free from that base propensity, which is sometimes erroneously imputed to the poetical tribe, who from their peculiar warmth of sensation are often thought to flatter, when they speak only their genuine feelings.

Perhaps Cowper sometimes indulged himself in a very different weakness, if I may call the little excesses of a generous independent pride by so harsh an appellation.

It is incumbent on me to explain the petty foible of my friend to which I allude. Having composed from the impulse of his heart his little poem on the elevation of his intimate companion in former days, Lord Thurlow, to the dignity of Chancellor, he condemned it to lie in long concealment from an apprehension, that although he knew the praise to be just, it might be supposed to flow from

a sordid and selfish solicitude to derive some advantage from the recent grandeur of a man, whom he had once cordially loved, but whom their different destinies had made for many years almost a personal stranger to the poet, though never an alien to his heart.

But to resume the few remarks I wish to make on the poem of Table-Talk. It contains what Cowper could readily command, a great variety of style. Much of the poem has the manner of Churchill, and particularly the lines that exhibit a strong character of that popular and powerful satirist;——a poet, whose highest excellence Cowper possessed, with many more refined attractions, which the energetic, but coarse spirit of that modern Juvenal could not attain. Towards the close of Table-Talk, the poet introduces very happily what he had proposed to himself, as the main scope of his own poetical labours——the service that a poet may render to the great interests of religion. This he describes in a strain of sublimity, and contrasts it very ably with inferior objects of poetical ambition.

From this poem of infinite diversity, it would be easy to select specimens of almost every excellence that can be found in a work of this nature, and

the modest author himself has confessed his own partiality to the verses that describe the character of a Briton. Truth however obliges me to observe, that this admirable prelude to the collected poetry of Cowper has a weak and ungraceful conclusion.

The four poems entitled Truth, Expostulation, Hope and Charity, are four christian exhortations to piety, which may be thought tedious and dull by readers who have no relish for devotional eloquence, or who, however blest with a serious sense of religion, have too hastily admitted the very strange and groundless dogma of Dr. Johnson, that "contemplative piety cannot be poetical." A position resembling that of the ancient sophist, who denied the existence of motion, and whose indignant hearer answered him by walking immediately in his sight. With such simple and forcible refutation, the genius of Cowper replies to the paradoxical pedantry of a critic, whose high intellectual powers, when he exerts and exhausts them to command and illuminate the expansive sphere of poetry, delight and disgust his readers alternately, [illegible] a frequent mixture of gigantic force, and dwarf-[illegible]ility. His weak, though solemn, sophistry [illegible]bject is completely refuted by the poems of [illegible]because contemplative piety, which, accord-

ing to the critic's assertion, cannot be poetical, is in truth, one of the most powerful charms by which this devout poet accomplishes his poetical enchantment.

But to return to the four sacred poems that led me to this remark. That on Truth exhibits the author's singular talent of blending the humorous and the sublime: in his portrait of the sanctified prude, he is at once the copyist and compeer of Hogarth; — in his picture of cheerful piety, and true Christian freedom, he soars to a species of excellence that the pencil of Hogarth could not command.

Expostulation flows in a more even tenor of sublime admonition:—it was founded on a sermon preached by the author's zealous and eloquent friend, Mr. Newton, and contains the following admirable description of what the clergy ought to be.

> The priestly brotherhood, devout, sincere,
> From mean self-interest, and ambition clear;
> Their hope in Heaven, servility their scorn,
> Prompt to persuade, expostulate, and warn;
> Their wisdom pure, and given them from above;
> Their usefulness insur'd by zeal and love;
> As meek as the man Moses, and withal
> As bold, as, in Agrippa's presence, Paul,

Should fly the world's contaminating touch,
Holy and unpolluted; are thine such?

I will not transcribe the closing couplet; because it appears to me one of the few passages in the poet, where the warm current of his zeal hurried him into a hasty expression of asperity, not in unison with the native and habitual candour of his contemplative mind.

The poem on Hope, although the poet means only to describe

That Hope, which can alone exclude despair.

has a gay diversity of colouring, and the dialogue introduced is written with exquisite pleasantry. The great and constant aim of the author is expressed in his motto,

Doceas iter, et sacra ostia pandas.

In the commencement of his poem on Charity, the author renders a just, and eloquent tribute to the humanity of Captain Cook; and in the progress of it bursts into an animated and graceful eulogy on Howard, the visitor of prisons. The sentiments that Cowper endeavours to impress on the heart of his

reader, in this series of devotional poems, are drawn from the great fountain of intellectual purity, the Gospel; and to the poet in his character of a Christian monitor, we may justly and gratefully apply the following verses from his poem on Charity

> When one, that holds communion with the skies,
> Has fill'd his urn, where these pure waters rise,
> And once more mingles with us meaner things,
> 'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings;
> Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
> That tells us, whence his treasures are supplied.

In the extensive and admirably varied poem on Conversation, the poet shines as a teacher of manners, as well as of morality and religion.

It is remarkable, that in this work he is particularly severe on what he considered as his own peculiar defect, that excess of diffidence, that insurmountable shyness, which is so apt to freeze the current of English conversation.

> Our sensibilities are so acute,
> The fear of being silent makes us mute.
>
> ——— ——— ———
>
> True modesty is a discerning grace,
> And only blushes in the proper place.

But counterfeit is blind, and skulks thro' fear,
Where tis a shame to be asham'd to appear;
Humility the parent of the first,
The last by vanity produc'd, and nurs'd.
The circle form'd, we sit, in silent state,
Like figures drawn upon a dial plate.
Yes ma'am, and no ma'am, utter'd softly show,
Every five minutes, how the minutes go.

This poem abounds with much admirable description both serious and comic. The portrait of a splenetic man is, perhaps, the most highly finished example of comic power; and the scene of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, is a perfect model of solemn and graceful simplicity, I cannot cease to speak of this very attractive poem, without observing that the author has inserted two passages intended to obviate such objections, as he conceived most likely to be urged against the tendency of his writings. He was aware, that the light and vain might suppose him a gloomy fanatic, and as a preservative against such injurious misconception, he composed the following just and animated lines.

What is fanatic frenzy, scorned so much,
And dreaded more than a contagious touch?

I grant it dang'rous; and approve your fear;
That fire is catching, if you draw too near;
But sage observers oft mistake the flame,
And give true piety that odious name.

He then draws an excellent picture of real fanaticism, and such a picture as could not have been painted by one of her votaries.

Again, to vindicate the cheerful tendency of the lessons he wishes to inculcate, he exclaims

—— Let no man charge me, that I mean
To cloath in sables every social scene,
And give good company a face severe,
As if they met around a father's bier!

I will add a few verses from the close of the poem, because they appear a just description of his own eloquence, both in poetry and conversation, when he conversed with those he loved.——He is speaking of a character improved by a proper sense of religion.

Thus touch'd, the tongue receives a sacred cure
For all that was absurd, prophane, impure:

Held within modest bounds, the tide of speech
Pursues the course that truth and nature teach;
Where'er it winds the salutary stream
Sprightly, and fresh, enriches every theme,
While all, the happy man possess'd before,
The gift of nature, or the classic store,
Is made subservient to the grand design
For which Heaven form'd the faculty divine.

The poem on Retirement may be a delightful and useful lesson to those, who wish to enjoy and improve a condition of life which is generally coveted by all, in some periods of their existence. The different votaries of retirement are very happily described; and the portrait of Melancholy in particular, has all that minute, and forcible excellence, derived from the faithful delineation of nature; for the poet described himself when under the overwhelming pressure of that grievous malady. The caution to the lover is expressed with all the delicacy and force of the most friendly admonition; and the fair sex are too much obliged to the tenderness of the poet to resent his bold assertion, that they are not entitled to absolute adoration.

This poem contains several of those exquisite, proverbial couplets, that I have noticed on a former

occasion. Verses like the following are fit to be treasured in the heart of every man.

An idler is a watch, that wants both hands,
As useless if it goes, as when it stands.

Absence of occupation is not rest;
A mind quite vacant is a mind distrest.

Religion does not censure, or exclude,
Unnumber'd pleasures, harmlessly pursued.

The very sweet close of this poem I will not dwell upon at present, because I mean to notice it, in collecting, as I advance, the most remarkable passages of the poet, in which he has spoken of himself.——I must not however, bid adieu to his first volume for the present, without observing, that of the smaller poems at the end of it, three are eminently happy, both in sentiment and expression; the verses assigned

to Alexander Selkirk, the Winter Nosegay, and Mutual Forbearance.

It may perhaps console some future diffident poet, on his first appearance in public, if his merits happen to be depreciated by the presumptuous sentence of periodical criticism, it may console him to be informed, that when the first volume of Cowper was originally published, one of the critical journals of his day, represented him as a good devout gentleman, without a particle of true poetical genius. To this very curious decision we may apply with a pleasant stroke of poetical justice, the following couplet from the book so sagaciously described.

> The moles and bats, in full assembly, find,
> On special search, the keen-ey'd eagle blind.

But to those, who were inclined to deny his title to the rank and dignity of a poet, Cowper made the best of all possible replies, by publishing a poem, which rapidly, and justly, became a prime favourite with every poetical reader.

In his *Task* he not only surpassed all his former compositions, but executed an extensive work, of such original and diversified excellence, that as it

arose without the aid of any model, so it will probably remain for ever unequalled by a succession of imitators.

" Unde nil majus generatur ipso,
" Nec viget quicquam simile aut secundum."

The Task may be called, a bird's-eye view of human life. It is a minute, and extensive survey of every thing most interesting to the reason, to the fancy, and to the affections of man. It exhibits his pleasures, and his pains; his pastimes, and his business; his folly, and his wisdom; his dangers, and his duties! all with such exquisite facility, and force of expression, with such grace and dignity of sentiment, that rational beings, who wish to render themselves more amiable, and more happy, can hardly be more advantageously employed, than in frequent perusal of the Task.

" O how fayre fruits may you to mortal men
" From wisdom's garden give! How many may
" By you the wiser, and the better prove!"

To apply three verses of singular simplicity from Nicholas Grimoald, (one of the earliest writers of

English blank-verse!) to the poet, who has added such a large increase of variegated lustre to that species of composition.

The Task, beginning with all the peaceful attractions of sportive gaiety, rises to the most solemn, and awful grandeur, to the highest strain of religious solemnity, Its frequent variation of tone is masterly in the greatest degree, and the main spell of that inexhaustible enchantment, which hurries the reader through a flowery maze of many thousand verses, without allowing him to feel a moment of languor or fatigue. Perhaps no author, antient or modern, ever possessed, so completely as Cowper, the nice art of passing, by the most delicate transition, from subjects to subjects, that might otherwise seem but little, or not at all, allied to each other; the rare talent

"Happily to steer
"From grave to gay, from lively to severe."

The Task may be compared to one of the grand fabricks of musical contrivance, where a single work contains a vast variety of power for producing such harmony and delight, as might be expected to arise only from a large collection of instruments. The

auditor is charmed by the vicissitudes of partial excellence, and astonished by the magnificent compass of a single production, But the supreme attraction of the Task arises from that conviction, which all, who delight in it, cannot fail to feel, that the poet, however pre-eminent in intellectual powers, must have been equally pre-eminent in tender benevolence of heart. His reader loves him as a sympathetic friend, and blesses him as an invaluable instructor.

The truth of this remark may be illustrated by the following verses, which I insert with pleasure, as an elegant proof of that affection in a stranger, which the poetry of Cowper has such a peculiar tendency to inspire.

ON SEEING

A SKETCH of COWPER,

BY

LAWRENCE.

Sweet Bard, whose mind thus pictur'd in thy face,
O'er every feature spreads a nobler grace;
Whose keen, but soften'd, eye appears to dart
A look of pity through the human heart;

To search the secrets of man's inward frame;
To weep with sorrow o'er his guilt and shame.
Sweet Bard with whom, in sympathy of choice,
I've oftimes left the world, at nature's voice,
To join the song that all her creatures raise,
To carol forth their great Creator's praise;
Or wrapt in visions of immortal day,
Have gaz'd on Truth in Zion's heavenly way.
Sweet Bard! may this thine image, all I know,
Or ever may, of Cowper's form below,
Teach one, who views it with a Christian's love,
To ssek, and find thee, in the realms above.

Persons, who estimate poetical talents more from the arbitrary dictates of established criticism, than from their own feelings, may be disposed to exclude Cowper from the highest rank of poets, because he has written no original work in the epic form:—He has constructed no fable; he has described no great action, accomplished by a variety of characters, derived either from history or invention; but if the great epic poets of all nations were assembled to give their suffrages concerning the rank to

be assigned to Cowper as a poet, I am persuaded they would address him to this effect.—" We are proud to receive you as a brother, because, if the form of your composition is different from ours, you are certainly equal to the noblest of our fraternity in the scope and effect of your verse. You are so truly a poet by the munificence of nature, that she seems to have given you an exclusive faculty (resembling the fabulous faculty of Midas relating to gold, though given to you for beneficial purposes alone) the faculty of turning whatever you touch, to a fit subject for poetry: you are the poet of familiar life; but you paint it with such felicity of design and execution, that as long as verse is valued upon earth, as a vehicle of instruction and delight, you must, and ought to be revered and beloved, as pre-eminently instructive and delightful—by having accomplished, with equal felicity, the two great and arduous objects of your art, you have deserved to be the most popular of poets."

Such, I apprehend, would be the praise, which all the perfect judges of his poetry, could they be selected from every age, past, present, and future, would unanimously bestow on the genius of Cowper. Yet the Task, though taken altogether, it is perhaps

the most attractive poem that was ever produced, and such as required the rarest assemblage of truly poetical powers for its production, bears like every work from a human hand, that certain mark of a mortal agent—Defect. Even the partiality of friendship must allow, that the Task has its blemishes, and the greatest of them is that tone of asperity in reproof, which I am persuaded its gentle and benevolent author caught unconsciously from his frequent perusal of the prophets. The severe invective against the commemoration of Handel is the most striking instance of the asperity to which I allude, and it awakened the displeasure of a poetical lady, whose displeasure Cowper of all men would have been most truly sorry to have excited, had he been as well acquainted with the charms of her conversation, as he was with her literary talents.

Cowper's eminent contemporary, the favourite poet of Scotland, seems to have felt with fraternal sensibility, both the beauties, and the blemishes of this most celebrated work.

"Is not the Task a glorious poem? (says Burns, in one of his letters to his accomplished and generous friend, Mrs. Dunlop) the religion of the Task, bating a few scraps of Calvinistic divinity, is

the religion of God and nature, the religion that exalts, that ennobles man!"

Though Cowper occasionally caught a certain air of Calvinistic austerity, he had not a particle of Calvin's intolerance in his heart. He could never have occasioned the cruel death of a Servetus. Indulgence and good-nature were the poet's predominant qualities, and their influence was such, that although his extraordinary talents for satire threw perpetual temptation in his way, he declined the temptation: he chose to be not a satirist, but a monitor, "*Vitæ sanctitas summa, comitas par; insectatur vitia non homines.*" He wisely observed, that the most dignified satarists are little better than mere beadles of Parnassus. He considered satire rather as the bane, than the glory, both of Dryden and of Pope: in truth, though many an upright man has, in a fit of honest moral indignation, begun to write satire in a persuasion that such works would benefit the world, and do honour to himself, yet even satirists of this higher order have generally found, that they did little more than gratify the common malignity of the world, and suffer angry and blind prejudice, and passions, to insinuate themselves imperceptibly into their nobler purposes, disfiguring their works, and disquiet-

ing their lives. Such perhaps was the natural train of reflection that suggested to Boileau the admirable verse, in which he feelingly and candidly condemns the path he had himself pursued.

" C'est un mauvais metier que celui de medire."

Cowper felt the truth of this maxim so forcibly, that in his poem on Charity he has turned the sharpest weapons of satire against the satirists themselves.

Their acrid temper turns, as soon as stirr'd,
The milk of their good purpose all to curd;
Their zeal begotten, as their works rehearse,
By lean despair, upon an empty purse,
The wild assassins start into the street,
Prepar'd to poignard whomsoe'er they meet.

These lines are alone sufficient to prove that Cowper could occasionally assume the utmost severity of invective; yet nature formed him to delight in exhortation, more than in reproof; and hence he justly describes himself in his true monitory character in the verses that very sweetly terminate his instructive poem on Retirement.

Content, if thus sequester'd, I may raise
A monitor's, though not a poet's praise;
And while I teach an art too little known,
To close life wisely, may not waste my own.

When a poet has so nobly entitled himself to the esteem and affection of his readers, the most fastidious of them can hardly be inclined to censure him as an egotist, if he takes more than one occasion to draw his own portrait. Few passages in Horace are read with more pleasure, than the verses in which he gives a cirsumstantial account of himself. This reflection induces me to add a few lines from the Task, in which the poet has delineated his own situation exactly in that point of view, which must be most pleasing to those who most feel an interest in his lot.

The more we have sympathized in his afflictions, the more we may rejoice in recollecting that he had seasons of felicity, which he, in some measure makes our own by the delightful fidelity of his description.

Had I the choice of sublunary good,
What could I wish, that I possess not here?

Health, leisure, means t' improve it, friendship, peace,
No loose or wanton, tho' a wand'ring muse,
And constant occupation without care!
Thus blest, I draw a picture of that bliss,
Hopeless indeed, that dissipated minds,
And profligate abusers of a world,
Created fair so much in vain for them,
Should seek the guiltless joys that I describe,
Allur'd by my report!··but sure no less,
That self-condemn'd they must neglect the prize,
And what they will not taste, must yet approve.
What we admire, we praise; and when we praise,
Advance it into notice, that, its worth
Acknowledg'd, others may admire it too:
I therefore recommend, tho' at the risk
Of popular disgust, yet boldly still,
The cause of piety, and sacred truth,
And virtue, and those scenes, which God ordain'd
Should best secure them, and promote them most.
Scenes that I love, and with regret perceive
Forsaken, or through folly not enjoy'd."

Indeed the great and rare art of enjoying life, in its purest and sublimest delights, is what this beneficent poet appears most anxious to communicate, and impress on the heart and soul of his reader. Witness that most exquisite passage of the Task,

here he teaches the pensive student, who contemates the face of the earth, to survey the works of his aker with a tender transport of filial exultation.

He looks abroad into the varied field
Of nature, and though poor, perhaps, compar'd
With those, whose mansions glitter in his sight,
Calls the delightful scen'ry all his own:
His are the mountains, and the vallies his,
And the resplendent rivers: his to enjoy
With a propriety, that none can feel,
But who, with filial confidence inspir'd,
Can lift to Heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
And smiling say——My Father made them all!
Are they not his by a peculiar right!
And by an emphasis of int'rest his,
Whose eye they fill with tears of holy joy,
Whose heart with praise, and whose exalted mind,
With worthy thoughts of that unwearied love,
That plann'd, and built, and still upholds a world,
So cloth'd with beauty for rebellious man?
Yes!——ye may fill your garners, ye that reap
The loaded soil, and ye may waste much good
In senseless riot, but ye will not find,
In feast, or in the chace, in song, or dance,
A liberty like his, who unimpeach'd
Of usurpation, and to no man's wrong,

Appropriates nature as his Father's work,
And has a richer use of yours, than you.

I believe the happiest hours of Cowper's life were those in which he was engaged on this noble poem, and as his happiness was in a great measure the fruit of his occupation, it is the more to be regretted that some incident propitious to poetry, did not engage his active spirit a second time in the construction of a great original work.

There was indeed a time, when his zealous, and much regarded friend and neighbour, Mr. Greatheed, most kindly exhorted him to such an enterprize: An anecdote, that I seize this opportunity of recording in the words of that gentleman.

" Homer being completely translated, and committed to the press, I endeavoured to urge upon Mr. Cowper's attention, the idea of a British epic, and would have recommended to him the reign of Alfred, the brightest ornament of the English throne, as one of the most eventful periods of our history. He discovered reluctance to the undertaking, and to the best of my recollection principally objected to the difficulties attending the introduction of a suitable machinery under the Christian dispensation. He

pointed out the absurdities of Tasso, and the deficiency of Glover in this respect, and thought that Milton had occupied the only epic ground fit for a Christian poet."

Cowper would probably have thought otherwise on such a suggestion, had it been pressed upon his fancy in a more propitious season of his life, before his spirit was harrassed by many troubles, which attended him during the latter years that he bestowed upon Homer, and above all, by the enfeebled health of Mrs. Unwin, to which he gratefully devoted such incessant attention, as must have inevitably impeded any great mental enterprize, even if his fervid imagination had been happily struck with any less obvous, and more promising, subject for epic song. Had he engaged in such an enterprize at a favorable season of his life, I am persuaded he would have enriched the literature of his country with a composition more valuable than his version of Homer, allowing to that version as high a value as translation can boast.

He possessed all the requisites for the happiest accomplishment of the most arduous original work—fancy, judgment, and taste; all of the highest order,

and in union so admirable, that they heightened the powers of each other! He was singularly exempt from the two great sources of literary, and indeed of moral imperfections---negligence, and affectation! From the first he was secured by a modest sense of his own abilities, united to a spirit of application like the alacrity of Cæsar.

"Nil actum reputans, si quid superesset agendum."

From affectation of every kind he was perpetually preserved by a majestic simplicity of mind, never seduced by false splendour, and most feelingly alive to all the graces of truth. But with the rarest combination of different faculties for the successful execution of any great poetical work, his tender and modest genius, sublime as it was, wanted the animating voice of friendship to raise it into confident exertion. The Task would not have been written without the inspiring voice of Lady Austen. The solemn and sage spirit of Numa required the inspiration of his Egeria.

——— "Sic sacra Numæ ritusque colendos
Mitis Aricinio dictabat nympha sub antro."

The great pleasure that Cowper felt in the con-

versation of accomplished women, inspired him with that delicate vivacity, with which he was accustomed to express his gratitude for a variety of little occasional presents, that he received from his female friends.

Dr. Johnson has said surlily, and unjustly, of Milton, " that he never learnt the art of doing little things with grace." But in truth, poets who possess such exquisite feelings, and such powers of language, as belonged to Milton, and to Cowper, can hardly fail to give elegance and grace to their poetical trifles, whenever affection leads them to trifle in verse. Cowper, whose sensations of gratitude were singularly happy in those sprightly poetical compliments, which he often addressed to ladies, in return for some highly welcome, though trivial gift, endeared to his affectionate spirit by his regard for the giver. To illustrate this very amiable part of his character, I shall insert a few of these animated and graceful trifles.

TO MY COUSIN

ANNE BODHAM,

ON RECEIVING FROM HER

A NET-WORK PURSE, MADE BY HERSELF.

MAY 4, 1793.

My gentle Anne, whom heretofore,
When I was young, and thou no more
Than plaything for a nurse;
I danced and fondled on my knee,
A kitten both in size and glee!
I thank thee for my Purse:

Gold pays the worth of all things here;
But not of love:——that gem's too dear
For richest rogues to win it;
I, therefore, as a proof of love,
Esteem thy present far above
The best things kept within it.

To Mrs. KING,

ON

HER KIND PRESENT TO THE AUTHOR,

A PATCHWORK QUILT OF HER OWN MAKING.

The bard, if e'er he feel at all,
Must sure be quicken'd by a call
Both on his heart and head,
To pay with tuneful thanks the care,
And kindness of a lady fair,
Who deigns to deck his bed.

A bed like this, in antient time,
On Ida's barren top sublime,
(As Homer's epic shows)
Composed of sweetest vernal flow'rs,
Without the aid of sun or show'rs,
For Jove and Juno rose.

Less beautiful, however gay,
Is that, which in the scorching day
Receives the weary swain;
Who, laying his long scythe aside,
Sleeps on some bank, with daisies pied,
'Till rous'd to toil again.

What labours of the loom I see!
Looms numberless have groan'd for me:
Should every maiden come
To scramble for the patch, that bears
The impress of the robe she wears,
The bell would toll for some.

And Oh! what havoc would ensue!
This bright display of every hue
All in a moment fled!
As if a storm should strip the bowers,
Of all their tendrils, leaves and flowers,
Each pocketing a shred.

Thanks then to ev'ry gentle fair
Who will not come to pick me bare
As bird of borrowed feather;
And thanks to one, above them all,
The gentle fair of Pirtenhall,
Who put THE WHOLE TOGETHER!

GRATITUDE.

ADDRESSED TO

LADY HESKETH.

This cap, that so stately appears,
With ribbon-bound tassel on high,
Which seems by the crest that it rears,
Ambitious of brushing the sky:
This cap to my Cousin I owe,
She gave it, and gave me beside,
Wreathed into an elegant bow
The ribbon, with which it is tied.

This wheel-footed studying chair,
Contriv'd both for toil and repose,
Wide-elbow'd, and wadded with hair,
In which I both scribble and doze,
Bright-studied to dazzle the eyes,
And rival in lustre of that,
In which, or astronomy lies,
Fair Cassiopeia sat.

These carpets, so soft to the foot,
Caledonia's traffic and pride!
Oh spare them, ye knights of the boot,
Escap'd from a cross-country ride!

This table and mirror within,
Secure from collision and dust,
At which I oft shave cheek and chin,
And periwig nicely adjust.

This moveable structure of shelves,
For its beauty admired and its use,
And charg'd with octavos and twelves,
The gayest I had to produce,
Where, flaming in scarlet and gold,
My poems enchanted I view,
And hope, in due time, to behold
My Iliad and Odyssey too.

This china, that decks the alcove,
Which here people call a beaufette,
But what the gods call it above,
Has ne'er been reveal'd to us yet:
These curtains, that keep the room warm
Or cool, as the season demands,
Those stoves, that for pattern and form,
Seem the labour of Mulciber's hands.

All these are not half that I owe
To one from our earliest youth,
To me ever ready to shew
Benignity, friendship, and truth;

For time, the destroyer declared,
And foe of our perishing kind,
If even her face he has spared,
Much less could he alter her mind.

Thus compass'd about with the goods,
And chattels of leisure and ease,
I indulge my poetical moods
In many such fancies as these;
And fancies I fear they will seem,
Poet's goods are not often so fine;
The poets will swear that I dream,
When I sing of the splendour of mine.

Though Cowper could occasionally trifle in yme, for the sake of amusing his friends, with an fectionate and endearing gaiety, he appears most uly himself, when he exerts his poetical talents for e higher purpose of consoling the afflicted. Wit- ss the following epistle, composed at the request Lady Austen, to console a particular friend of hers. enty-five letters, written by Mrs. Billacoys, the ly to whom the poem is addressed, were inserted

in an early volume of the Theological Miscellany, in which the poem also appeared. Mr. Bull has annexed it to Cowper's translations from the spiritual songs of Madame Guion, but I willingly embrace the opportunity of reprinting it in this volume, from a copy corrected by the author, in the pleasing persuasion, that it must prove to all religious readers, acquainted with affliction, a lenient charm of very powerful effect.

EPISTLE

TO A LADY IN FRANCE,

A PERSON OF GREAT PIETY, AND MUCH AFFLICTED.

Madam! a stranger's purpose in these lays
Is to congratulate, and not to praise;
To give the creature, the Creator's due
Were guilt in me, and an offence to you,
From man to man, and ev'n to woman paid,
Praise is the medium of a knavish trade.
A coin by craft for folly's use design'd,
Spurious, and only current with the blind.

The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land, where sorrow is unknown;

No trav'ller ever reached that blest abode
Who found not thorns and briars on his road.
The world may dance along the the flowery plain,
Cheer'd, as they go, by many a sprightly strain,
Where Nature has her yielding mosses spread
With unshod feet, and yet unharm'd, they tread,
Admonish'd, scorn the caution, and the friend,
Bent all on pleasure, heedless of its end.
But He, who knew what human hearts would prove,
How slow to learn the dictates of his love;
That hard by nature, and of stubborn will,
A life of ease would make them harder still;
In pity to a chosen few, design'd
T' escape the common ruin of their kind,
Call'd for a cloud to darken all their years,
And said——Go spend them in the vale of tears!

Oh balmy gales of soul-reviving air,
Oh salutary streams that murmur there,
These flowing from the fount of grace above!
Those breath'd from lips of everlasting love!
The flinty soil indeed their feet annoys,
Chill blasts of trouble nip their springing joys;
An envious world will interpose its frown,
To mar delights superior to its own,
And many a pang, experienc'd still within,
Reminds them of their hated inmate, sin!

But ills of every shape, of every name,
Transform'd to blessings, miss their cruel aim ;
And every moment's calm, that sooths the breast,
Is given in earnest of eternal rest.

Ah be not sad ! although thy lot be cast
Far from a flock, and in a boundless waste;
No shepherds' tents within thy view appear,
But the chief Shepherd even there is near :
Thy tender sorrows, and thy plaintive strain,
Flow in a foreign land, but not in vain,
Thy tears all issue from a source divine,
And every drop bespeaks a Saviour thine.

So once, in Gideon's fleece, the dews were found,
And drought on all the drooping flocks around.

It may be observed to the honour of the poet, that his extreme shyness and dislike of addressing an absolute stranger, did not preclude him from a free and happy use of his mental powers, when he had a prospect of comforting the distressed. His diffidence was often wonderfully great, but his humanity was greater.

Diffident as Cowper was by nature, though a poet, he wanted not the becoming resolution to defend his poetical opinions, when he felt them to be just; particularly on the structure of English verse, which he had examined with the eye of a master. As a proof of this resolution, I transcribe with pleasure, a passage from one of his earliest Letters to his bookseller, Mr. Johnson.

It happened that some accidental reviser of the manuscript, had taken the liberty to alter a line in a poem of Cowper's——this liberty drew from the offended poet, the following very just, and animated remonstrance, which I am anxious to preserve, because it elucidates with great felicity of expression, his deliberate ideas on English versification.

I did not write the line, that has been tampered with, hastily, or without due attention to the construction of it, and what appeared to me its only merit, is, in its present state, entirely annihilated.

I know that the ears of modern verse-writers are delicate to an excess, and their readers are troubled with the same squeamishness as themselves. So that if a line do not run as smooth as quicksilver, they

are offended. A critic of the present day serves a poem as a cook serves a dead turkey, when she fastens the legs of it to a post, and draws out all the sinews. For this we may thank Pope, but unless we could imitate him in the closeness and compactness of his expression, as well as in the smoothness of his numbers, we had better drop the imitation, which serves no other purpose than to emasculate and weaken all we write. Give me a manly, rough line, with a deal of meaning in it, rather than a whole poem full of musical periods, that have nothing but their oily smoothness to recommend them!

I have said thus much, as I hinted in the beginning, because I have just finished a much longer poem than the last, which our common friend will receive by the same messenger that has the charge of this letter. In that poem there are many lines, which an ear, so nice as the gentleman's who made the abovementioned alteration, would undoubtedly condemn, and yet (if I may be permitted to say it) they cannot be made smoother without being the worse for it. There is a roughness on a plum, which nobody that understands fruit would rub off, though the plum would be much more polished without it. But lest I tire you, I will only add, that I wish you to guard me

from all such meddling; assuring you, that I always write as smoothly as I can, but that I never did, never will, sacrifice the spirit or sense of a passage to the sound of it."

In shewing with what proper spirit the poet could occasionally vindicate his own verse, let me observe, that although he frequently speaks in his Letters with humorous asperity concerning critics, no man could be more willing to receive, with becoming modesty and gratitude, the friendly assistance of just and temperate criticism. Some proofs of his humility, so laudable, if not uncommon, in poets of great powers, I shall seize this opportunity of producing in a few extracts from a series of the author's Letters to his bookseller.

Weston, Feb. 11, 1790.

DEAR SIR,

I am very sensibly obliged by the remarks of Mr. Fuseli, and beg that you will tell him so; they afford me opportunities of improvement which I shall not neglect. When he shall see the press-copy, he will be convinced of this, and will be convinced likewise, that smart as he sometimes is,

he spares me often, when I have no mercy on myself. He will see almost a new translation. * * * I assure you faithfully, that whatever my faults may be, to be easily or hastily satisfied with what I have written is not one of them.

Sept. 7, 1790.

It grieves me, that after all, I am obliged to go into public without the whole advantage of Mr. Fuseli's judicious strictures. My only consolation is, that I have not forfeited them by my own impatience. Five years are no small portion of a man's life, especially at the latter end of it, and in those five years, being a man of almost no engagements, I have done more in the way of hard work, than most could have done in twice the number. I beg you to present my compliments to Mr. Fuseli, with many and sincere thanks for the services that his own more important occupations would allow him to render me.

It is a singular spectacle for those who love to contemplate the progress of social arts, to observe a foreigner, who has raised himself to high rank in the arduous profession of a painter, correcting, and thanked for correcting, the chief poet of England, in his English version of Homer.

From the series of Letters now before me, I cannot resist the temptation of transcribing two more passages, because they display the disposition of Cowper in a very amiable point of view——the first relates to Mr. Newton—the second to Mr. Johnson himself.

Weston, Oct. 3, 1790.

Mr. Newton having again requested, that the preface, which he wrote for my first volume may be prefixed to it, I am desirous to gratify him in a particular, that so emphatically bespeaks his friendship for me; and should my books see another edition, shall be obliged to you if you will add it accordingly.

I beg that you will not suffer your reverence either for Homer, or his translator, to check your continual examinations. I never knew with certainty, till now, that the marginal strictures I found in the Task-proofs were yours. The justness of them, and the benefit I derived from them, are fresh in my memory, and I doubt not that their utility will be the same in the present instance.

Weston, Oct. 30, 1790.

I am anxious to preserve this singular anecdote, as it is honourable both to the modest poet, and to his intelligent bookseller.

But let me recall the reader's attention to the Letter, in which the poet delivered so forcibly his own ideas of English versification.

This Letter leads me to suggest a reason, why some readers imagine, that the rhyme of Cowper is not equal to his blank-verse. Their idea arises from his not copying the melody of Pope: but from this he deviated by design, and his character of Pope, in

the poem of Table-Talk, may, when added to this Letter, completely unfold to us his reasons for doing so. The lines to which I allude are these:

> Then Pope, as harmony itself exact,
> In verse well-disciplin'd, complete, compact,
> Gave virtue and morality a grace,
> That, quite eclipsing pleasure's painted face,
> Levied a tax of wonder and applause,
> E'en on the fools that trampled on their laws:
> But he (his musical finesse was such,
> So nice his ear, so delicate his touch)
> Made poetry a mere mechanic art,
> And every warbler has his tune by heart.

Cowper conceived that Pope, by adhering too closely to the use of pure iambic feet in his verse, deprived himself of an advantage to be gained by a more liberal admission of other feet, and particularly spondees, which according to Cowper's idea, have a very happy effect in giving variety, dignity, and force. He exemplifies his idea by exclaiming in the following couplet of the same poem——

> Give me the line, that ploughs its stately course,
> Like a proud swan, conquering the stream by force.

It is however remarkable, that Cowper, in his poem on the nativity, from the French of Madame Guion, seems to have chosen the style of Pope, which on other occasions he had rather tried to avoid. His versification in the poem just mentioned, affords a complete proof, that in ryhme, as in blank verse, he could at once be easy, forcible, and melodious.

Churchill had before objected to an excess of unvaried excellence in the verses of Pope. An objection that appears rather fastidious, than reasonable. Happy the poet, whose antagonist can only say of his language, that it is too musical, and of his fancy, that it is too much under the guidance of reason! Such are the charges by which even scholars and critics, of acknowledged taste, and good-nature, have from the influence of accidental prejudice, endeavoured to lessen the poetical eminence of Pope; a poet remarkably unfortunate in his numerous biographers! for Ruffhead, whom Warburton employed in a task, which gratitude might have taught him to execute better himself, is neglected as dull; Johnson, though he nobly and eloquently vindicates the dignity of the poet, yet betrays a perpetual inclination to render him contemptible as a man: and Warton, though by nature one of the most candid, and liberal of critics, contin-

ues, as a biographer, to indulge that prejudice, which had early induced him in his popular essay on this illustrious poet, to endeavour to sink him a little in the scale of poetical renown; not, I believe, from any envious motive, but as an affectionate compliment to his friend Young, the patron to whom he inscribed his essay!

Of this continued prejudice, which this good-natured critic was himself very far from perceiving, he exhibits a remarkable proof in his life of Pope, by the following facetious severity on the translation of Homer.

"No two things can be so unlike, as the Iliad of Homer, and the Iliad of Pope; to colour the images, to point the sentences, to lavish Ovidian graces on the simple Grecian, is to put a bag-wig on Mr. Townley's fine busto of the venerable old bard."

This sentence has all the sprightly pleasantry of my amiable old friend; but to prove that it is critically unjust, the reader has only to observe, that Pope is very far from having produced that ludicrous effect which the comparison of the critic supposes. Spec-

tators must laugh, indeed, at a bust of Homer enveloped in a wig, but the reader has not a disposition to laughter in reading the Iliad of Pope. On the contrary, in many, many, passages, where it deviates widely from the original, a reader of taste and candour admires both the dexterity, and the dignity of the translator, and if he allows the version to be unfaithful, yet with Mr. Twining, (the accomplished translator of Aristotle, who has justly and gracefully applied an expressive Latin verse to this glorious translation, so bitterly branded with the epithet unfaithful!) he tenderly exclaims

Perfida, sed quamvis perfida, cara tamen.

I have been induced, by a sense of what is due to the great works of real genius, to take the part of Pope against the lively injustice of a departed friend, for whose literary talents, and for whose social character, I still retain the sincerest regard. The delight and the improvement derived from such noble works as the Homer of Pope, ought to guard every scholar against any partialities of friendship, that can render him blind to the predominant merits, or severe to the petty imperfections of such a work. Predominant

merits, and petty imperfections are certainly to be found in the translation of Pope. These are temperately, and judiciously displayed in the liberal essay of that gentle and amiable critic, Spence, on the Odyssey; who, though he was rather partial to blank-verse, yet regarded Pope's Homer, as a work entitled to great admiration. It is indeed a work so truly admirable, that I should be sorry, if the more faithful version of my favourite friend, could materially injure the honour of its author; but between Pope and Cowper there is no contest: "They are performers on different instruments," as Cowper has very properly remarked himself, in the Preface to his own translation.

We may apply to the two translators, therefore, the comprehensive Latin words, that Gibbon applied to two eminent lawyers——"*Magis Pares, quam similes,*" but of the two translators it may be added, that each has attained such a degree of excellence in the mode he adopted, as will probably remain unsurpassed for ever. Instead therefore of endeavouring to decide which is entitled to the greater portion of praise, a reader, who has derived great pleasure from both, may rather wish (for the embellishment and honour of the English language) that

it may exhibit a double version of every great ancient poet perfectly equal in spirit and beauty to the Homers of Pope and Cowper. My impartial esteem for the merits of these two pre-eminent translators had almost tempted me to introduce in this composition a minute display of their alternate successes and failures in many most striking passages of Homer, but on reflection it appears to me, that such a comparison, if fairly and extensively conducted, would form an episode too large for the body of my work, and the spirit of my departed friend seem to admonish me against it, in the following words of his Grecian favourite.——

Μητ' αρ με μαλ' αινεε, μητε τι νεικει
Ειδοσι γαρ τοι ταυτα μετ' Αργειοις αγορευεις,

Neither praise me much, nor blame,
For these are Grecians, in whose ears thou speak'st,
And know me well!

Cowper's Homer's Iliad, 10.

I will therefore confine myself to the general result of such a comparison, and I am persuaded that all unprejudiced scholars, who may amuse themselves

by pursuing the comparison, will find the result to be this: that both the English poets have rendered noble justice to their original, taken altogether; that in separate parts each translator has frequently sunk beneath him, and each in their happier moments surpassed the model which they endeavoured to copy.

As to the emolument that each translator received, for labour so extensive and so meritorious, we may observe with concern, that Cowper obtained for his Iliad and Odyssey united, not half the sum, which the zeal of many active and liberal friends, enabled Pope to collect from his Iliad alone. That work though accomplished early in his life, produced to its author considerably more than five thousand pounds. The years employed by each translator in the same arduous undertaking were nearly equal. But to form that equality, we must include the time devoted by Cowper to the great changes he made in new modelling his translation.

"I began the Iliad in my twenty-fifth year (said Pope to Mr. Spence) and it took up that and five more to finish it."

Pope had partners in the latter portion of his work: Cowper accomplished his mighty labour by his own exertions; and he seems to have taken an

honest pleasure in recording with his own hand, the time, and the pains that he bestowed on his Translation.

In the copy of Clarke's Homer, which he valued particularly as the gift of his friend, Mr. Rose, he inserted the following memorandum.

" *My translation of the Iliad I began on the twenty-first day of November, in the year* 1784, *and finished the translation of the Odyssey on the twenty-fifth day of August,* 1790: *during eight months of this time I was hindered by indisposition, so that I have been occupied in the work on the whole five years and one month.*

W. Cowper.

" *Mem.*——*I gave the work another revisal, while it was in the press, which I finished March* 4, 1791."

When we add to this account all the time which he gave to preparations for a second edition, it will hardly be hyperbolical to say, that his deeply studied version of Homer was, like the siege of Troy, a work of ten years. Nor will this time appear won-

derful, when we recollect how determined Cowper was to be as minutely faithful, as possible, to the exact sense of his original. Ths following passage from one of his Letters to Mr. Park will shew how much he gratified his own mind by such scrupulous fidelity. In thanking his friend for a present of Chapman's Iliad, he says——

Weston, July 15, 1793.

I have consulted him in one passage of some difficulty, and find him giving a sense of his own, not at all warranted by the words of Homer. Pope sometimes does this; and sometimes, omits the difficult part entirely. I can boast of having done neither, though it has cost me infinite pains to exempt myself from the necessity.

The late Mr. Wakefield, in republishing Pope's Homer, has mentioned Cowper's superior fidelity to his original, with the liberal praise of a scholar, but he falls, I think, into injudicious severity on the structure of his verse—a severity the more remarkable, as he warmly censures Boswell for *unfeeling petulance,*

and *insolent dogmatism,* in speaking of Cowper's translation. Mr. Wakefield, though a man of extensive learning, and acute sensibility, appears to me in some measure unjust both to Cowper and to Pope. He labours to prove, that Pope was miserably defective in the knowledge of Greek, and questions the exactitude of Lord Bathurst's testimony, in the anecdote that seemed to vindicate the translator's acquaintance with the original. It is in my power to strengthen the credibility of that anecdote by a circumstance within my own memory, which I mention with pleasure, to refute a strange uncandid supposition, that Pope did not read the Greek which he professed to translate; but trusted entirely to the other translators. Many years ago I had in my hands, a small edition of Homer, (Greek, without Latin) and was the very copy that Pope used in his translation. It had a few memorandums in his own hand-writing, ascertaining the lines he translated on such and such days. I might have bought the book for a price considerably above its usual value, but I was at that time unhappily infected with Warton's prejudice against the genius of Pope, and from the influence of that prejudice, I failed to purchase a book, which, " on my mended judgment, if I offend not to say it

is mended," I should have rejoiced to acquire by doubling the price. May this petty anecdote be a warning to every literary youth, of an ardent spirit, not to adopt, too hastily, ideas that may lessen his regard for such celebrated writers, as time and experience will probably endear to his more cultivated mind.

It is indeed a prejudice not uncommon in the literary world, that little respect is due to poetical translators. The learned and amiable Jortin says, in his Life of Erasmus, "the translating of poets into other languages, and into verse, seems to be an occupation beneath a good poet; a work in which there is much labour, and little honour."

Jortin was led to this idea by some expressions in a letter from Erasmus to Eobanus Hessus, who translated Homer into very animated Latin verse. As that translator did not employ a living language in his version of the great poet, his correspondent might justly apprehend that the credit of his work would not be answerable to its labour; but surely the case is very different when poets who have gained reputation by original works in a modern language, devote their talents to make their countrymen (learned or

unlearned) easily and agreeably intimate with the poetical favourites of the ancient world.

Jortin presumes that pecuniary advantage must be a primary motive with a translator of extensive works, but there is a nobler incentive to such composition, and one that I am persuaded was very forcibly felt both by Pope and Cowper—I mean the generous gratification that a feeling spirit enjoys in a fair prospect of adding new lustre to the glory of a favourite author, to whom he has been often indebted for inexhaustible delight. He labours indeed, but he frequently labours

"Studio fallente laborem."

Yet the magnitude of such works entitles them to no ordinary praise, when they are accomplished with considerable success. Every nation ought to think itself highly indebted to translators who enrich their native language by works of such merit as the Homers of Pope and Cowper, because a long translation, to the greatest masters of poetical diction, is a sort of fatiguing dance performed in fetters. It certainly was so to Pope, and even to Cowper, whose versification in his Homer though so excellent, that it gives to his Translation what Johnson calls the first

excellence of a translator, " to be read with pleasure by those who know not the original"—yet seems not, in every part, to have that exquisite union of force, freedom, and fluency, which is felt so delightfully through all the books of the Task. It is there that the versification of Cowper is most truly Homeric: that it perpetually displays what Plutarch describes as the characteristic of Homer's verse, compared with that of Antimachus, " a certain charm, superadded to other graces and power, an appearance of having been executed with dexterous facility."*

Perhaps of all poets, antient and modern, Homer, and Cowper in his original composition, exhibit this charm in the highest degree. They both have the gift of speaking in verse, as if poetry were their native tongue.

* Ημεν Αντιμαχϐ ποιησις και τα Διονυσιϐ ζωγραφηματα, των Κολοφωνιων ισχυν εχοντα και τϑνον εκβεβιασμενοις και καταπονοις εοικε: ταις δε Νικομαχϐ γραφαις και τοις Ομηρϐ στιχοις μετα της αλλης δυναμεως και χαριτος, προσεστι το δοκειν ευχερως και ραδιως απειργασθαι.

Plutarch: in Timoleone.

The poetical powers of the latter were indeed a gift, and his use of them was worthy of the veneration which he felt towards the giver of every good. He has accomplished as a poet, the sublimest object of poetical ambition—He has dissipated the general prejudice, that held it hardly possible for a modern author to succeed in sacred poetry—He has proved, that verse and devotion are natural allies—He has shewn, that true poetical genius cannot be more honourably, or more delightfully employed, than in diffusing through the heart and mind of man a filial affection for his Maker, with a firm and cheerful trust in his word—He has sung, in a strain equal to the subject, the blessed advent of universal peace; and perhaps the temperate enthusiasm of friendship may not appear too presumptuous in supposing, that his poetry will have no inconsiderable influence in preparing the world for a consummation so devoutly to be wished.

Those who are little inclined to attribute such mighty powers to modern verse, may yet allow that the more the works of Cowper are read, the more his readers will find reason to admire the variety, and the extent, the graces, and the energy of his literary talents; the universal admiration excited by these

will be heightened, and endeared, to the friends of virtue, by the obvious reflection, that his writings, excellent as they appear, were excelled by the gentleness, the benevolence, and the sanctity of his life. To the merits of such a life, I could wish, that a more early intimacy with my departed friend, had enabled me to render more ample justice; but affection has made me industrious in my endeavours to supply, from the purest sources of intelligence, all the deficiency of my personal knowledge, and in composing this cordial tribute to a man whose history is so universally interesting, my chief ambition has been to deserve the approbation of his pure spirit, who appeared to me on earth among the most amiable of earthly friends, and whom I cherish a lively hope of beholding in a state of happier existence, with the spirits of "just men made perfect."

Pardon me thou tenderest of mortals! if I have praised thee with a warmth of affection, that might appear to thy diffident nature to border on excess: I am not conscious that I have, in the slightest particular, over-stepped the modesty of truth, but lest expressions of my own should have a more questionable shape, I will close this imperfect, though affection-

ate memorial, by applying to thee those tender, and beautiful verses, which Cowley (one of thy favourite poets!) addressed to a poetical brother, in all points perhaps, and assuredly in genius, by many degrees thy inferior.

Long did the Muses banish'd slaves abide,
And built vain pyramids to mortal pride:
Like Moses, thou (tho' spells and charms withstand)
Hast brought them nobly home, back to their holy land.
Poet and Saint to thee are justly given;
The two most sacred names of Earth and Heaven!

POSTSCRIPT.

IT has been once more my lot, during the process of printing an extensive work, to lose a friend, whom I had anxiously hoped to please with a sight of my completed publication. I allude to Lady Austen, whose name is justly mentioned with honour in the Life of Cowper, as she possessed and exerted an influence so happily favourable to the genius of the poet. Before I began the present work, I had the pleasure, and the advantage, to form a personal acquaintance with this lady, she favoured me, in a very graceful and obliging manner, with much valuable information, and with some highly interesting materials for the history of our friend, who had sportively given her the title of sister, and who, while their intercourse lasted, treated her with all the tenderness, and all the confidence of a brother.

Her maiden name was Richardson; she was married very early in life to Sir Robert Austen, Baronet, and resided with him in France, where he died. Her intercourse with Cowper is already related;—in a subsequent period she was married to a native of France, Mr. De Tardif, a gentleman, and a poet, who has expressed, in many elegant French verses, his just and deep sense of her accomplished, endearing character. In visiting Paris with him in the course of the summer of 1802, she sunk under the fatigue of the excursion, and died in that city on the 12th of August.

My obligations to her kindness, induce me to terminate this brief account of a person so cordially regarded by Cowper, and so instrumental to the existence of his greatest work, with an offering of respect and gratitude, in the shape of

AN

EPITAPH.

Honour and Peace! ye guardians kindly just,
Fail not in duty to this hallow'd dust!

And mortals (all, whose cultur'd spirits know
Joys that pure faith, and heavenly verse bestow!)
Passing this tomb, its buried inmate bless!
And obligation to her powers confess,
Who, when she grac'd this earth, in Austen's name,
Wak'd in a poet, inspiration's flame!
Remov'd by counsel, like the voice of spring,
Fetters of diffidence from fancy's wing;
Sent the freed eagle in the sun to bask,
And from the mind of Cowper—call'd the TASK!

I close my work with these verses, from a persuasion that I can pay no tribute to the memory of Cowper more truly acceptable to his tender spirit, than praise sincerely bestowed on the objects of his affection.

THE

APPENDIX.

No. 1. *Original Poems.*

2. *Translations of Greek Verses.*

3. *Translations from Horace and Virgil.*

4. *Translations from the Latin Poems of Bourne, and the Epigrams of Owen.*

5. *Montes Glaciales, in English and Latin.*

6. *Verses to the Memory of Dr. Lloyd.*

7. *Translations from the Fables of Gay.*

8. *The Connoiseurs, Nos.* 119, 134, & 138. *Motto on the King's Clock.*

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

ORIGINAL POEMS.

To JOHN JOHNSON,

ON HIS PRESENTING ME WITH AN ANTIQUE

BUST OF HOMER.

KINSMAN belov'd, and as a son by me!
When I behold this fruit of thy regard,
The sculptur'd form of my old fav'rite bard!
I rev'rence feel for him, and love for thee.

Joy too, and grief! much joy that there should be
Wise men, and learn'd, who grudge not to reward
With some applause my bold attempt, and hard,
Which others scorn: Critics by courtesy!

The grief is this, that sunk in Homer's mine
I lose my precious years, now soon to fail!
Handling his gold, which howsoe'er it shine,
Proves dross when balanc'd in the Christian scale!
Be wiser thou!—like our fore-father DONNE,
Seek heavenly wealth, and work for God alone!

To the Reverend Mr. NEWTON,

ON HIS RETURN FROM RAMSGATE.

THAT ocean you of late survey'd,
Those rocks I too have seen,
But I, afflicted and dismay'd,
You, tranquil and serene.

You from the flood-controuling steep
Saw stretch'd before your view,
With conscious joy, the threat'ning deep,
No longer such to you.

To me, the waves that ceaseless broke
Upon the dang'rous coast,
Hoarsely, and ominously, spoke
Of all my treasure lost.

Your sea of troubles you have past,
And found the peaceful shore;
I tempest-toss'd, and wreck'd at last,
Come home to port no more.

LOVE ABUSED.

WHAT is there in the vale of life,
Half so delightful as a wife,
When friendship, love, and peace combine
To stamp the marriage-bond divine?
The stream of pure and genuine love
Derives its current from above;
And earth, a second Eden shows,
Where'er the healing water flows:
But ah, if from the dykes and drains
Of sensual nature's fev'rish veins,
Lust, like a lawless headstrong flood,
Impregnated with ooze and mud,
Descending fast on ev'ry side
Once mingles with the sacred tide,
Farewell the soul-enliv'ning scene!
The banks that wore a smiling green,
With rank defilement overspread,
Bewail their flow'ry beauties dead.
The stream polluted, dark, and dull,
Diffused into a Stygian pool,
Through life's last melancholy years
Is fed with ever flowing tears:
Complaints supply the zephyr's part,
And sighs that heave a breaking heart.

EPITAPH

On Mr. CHESTER, of Chicheley.

TEARS flow, and cease not, where the good man lies,
Till all who knew him follow to the skies.
Tears therefore fall where Chester's ashes sleep;
Him wife, friends, brothers, children, servants, weep—
And justly—few shall ever him transcend
As husband, parent, brother, master, friend.

EPITAPH

On Mrs. M. HIGGINS, of Weston.

LAURELS may flourish round the conqueror's tomb,
But happiest they, who win the world to come:
Believers have a silent field to fight,
And their exploits are veil'd from human sight.
They in some nook, where little known they dwell,
Kneel, pray in faith, and rout the hosts of Hell;
Eternal triumphs crown their toils divine,
And all those triumphs, Mary, now are thine.

To Count GRAVINA,

On his translating the author's song on a Rose

INTO ITALIAN VERSE.

MY rose, Gravina, blooms anew,
And steep'd not now in rain,
But in Castalian streams by you,
Will never fade again.

INSCRIPTION

For a Stone erected at the sowing of a Grove of Oaks,

At Chillington, the seat of T. Giffard, Esqr. 1790.

OTHER stones the æra tell
When some feeble mortal fell;
I stand here to date the birth
Of these hardy sons of earth.

Which shall longest brave the sky,
Storm and frost—these oaks or I?
Pass an age or two away,
I must moulder and decay,
But the years that crumble me
Shall invigorate the tree.

Spread the branch, dilate its size,
Lift its summit to the skies.

Cherish honour, virtue, truth!
So shalt thou prolong thy youth;
Wanting these, however fast
Man be fixt, and form'd to last,
He is lifeless even now,
Stone at heart, and cannot grow.

Inscription for an Hermitage,

IN THE AUTHOR'S GARDEN.

THIS cabin, Mary, in my sight appears,
Built as it has been in our waning years,
A rest afforded to our weary feet,
Preliminary to——the last retreat.

STANZAS

On the late indecent Liberties taken with the remains of the great MILTON.——Anno, 1790.

ME too, perchance, in future days,
The sculptur'd stone shall show,
With Paphian myrtle, or with bays
Parnassian, on my brow.

But I, or ere that season come,
Escap'd from every care,
Shall reach my refuge in the tomb,
And sleep securely there.*

So sang in Roman tone and style,
The youthful bard ere long
Ordain'd to grace his native isle
With her sublimest song.

Who then but must conceive disdain
Hearing the deed unblest
Of wretches who have dar'd prophane
His dread sepulchral rest.

Ill fare the hands that heav'd the stones
Where Milton's ashes lay
That trembled not to grasp his bones,
And steal his dust away.

* Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus
Nectens aut Paphia myrti aut Parnassidè lauri
Fronde comas——At ego securâ pace quiescam.

MILTON.

Oh ill-requited bard! neglect
Thy living worth repay'd,
And blind idolatrous respect
As much affronts thee dead.

A TALE,

Founded on a Fact, which happened in January, 1779.

WHERE Humber pours his rich commercial stream
There dwelt a wretch, who breath'd but to blaspheme
In subterraneous caves his life he led,
Black as the mine, in which he wrought for bread.
When on a day, emerging from the deep,
A sabbath-day! (such sabbaths thousands keep!)
The wages of his weekly toil he bore
To buy a cock—whose blood might win him more
As if the noblest of the feather'd kind
Were but for battle and for death designed;
As if the consecrated hours were meant
For sport, to minds on cruelty intent;
It chanc'd, (such chances Providence obey!)
He met a fellow-lab'rer on the way,

Whose heart the same desires had once inflam'd;
But now the savage temper was reclaim'd.
Persuasion on his lips had taken place;
For all plead well, who plead the cause of grace!
His iron-heart, with scripture he assail'd,
Woo'd him to hear a sermon, and prevail'd.
His faithful bow, the mighty preacher drew,
Swift, as the lightning-glimpse, the arrow flew,
He wept; he trembled; cast his eyes around,
To find a worse than he: But none he found.
He felt his sins, and wonder'd he should feel.
Grace made the wound, and grace alone could heal!
Now farewell oaths, and blasphemies, and lies!
He quits the sinner's, for the martyr's prize.
That holy day was wash'd with many a tear,
Gilded with hope, yet shaded too by fear.
The next, his swarthy brethren of the mine
Learn'd, by his alter'd speech—the change divine!
Laugh'd when they should have wept, and swore the day
Was nigh, when he would swear as fast as they.
"No, (said the penitent:) such words shall share
"This breath no more; devoted now to pray'r.
"Oh! if thou seest, (thine eye the future sees!)
"That I shall yet again blaspheme, like these;

" Now strike me to the ground, on which I kneel,
" Ere yet this heart relapses into steel;
" Now take me to that Heaven, I once defy'd,
" Thy presence, thy embrace!"—he spoke and died!

A TALE.

IN Scotland's realm, where trees are few,
Nor even shrubs abound;
But where, however bleak the view,
Some better things are found.

For husband there, and wife may boast
Their union undefil'd;
And false-ones are as rare almost,
As hedge-rows in the wild.

In Scotland's realm, forlorn and bare,
This history chanc'd of late——
This history of a wedded pair,
A chaffinch and his mate.

The spring drew near, each felt a breast
With genial instinct fill'd;
They pair'd, and only wish'd a nest,
But found not where to build.

The heaths uncover'd, and the moors,
Except with snow and sleet;
Sea-beaten rocks, and naked shores,
Could yield them no retreat.

Long time a breeding place they sought,
'Till both grew vex'd and tir'd;
At length a ship arriving, brought
The good so long desir'd.

A ship!——could such a restless thing,
Afford them place to rest?
Or was the merchant charg'd to bring
The homeless birds a nest?

Hush!——Silent hearers profit most!——
This racer of the sea
Prov'd kinder to them than the coast,
It serv'd them with a tree.

But such a tree; 'twas shaven deal,
The tree they call a mast;
And had a hollow with a wheel,
Through which the tackle pass'd.

Within that cavity aloft
Their roofless home they fixt;
Form'd with materials neat and soft,
Bents, wool, and feathers mixt.

Four iv'ry eggs soon pave its floor,
With russet specks bedight;—
The vessel weighs—forsakes the shore,
And lessens to the sight.

The mother-bird is gone to sea,
As she had chang'd her kind;
But goes the mate? Far wiser he
Is doubtless left behind.

No!—Soon as from ashore he saw
The winged mansion move;
He flew to reach it, by a law
Of never-failing love!

Then perching at his consort's side,
Was briskly born along ;
The billows and the blast defied,
And cheer'd her with a song.

The seaman, with sincere delight,
His feather'd shipmate eyes,
Scarce less exulting in the sight,
Than when he tows a prize.

For seamen much believe in signs,
And from a chance so new,
Each some approaching good divines,
And may his hopes be true !

Hail ! honour'd land ! a desert, where
Not even birds can hide ;
Yet parent of this loving pair,
Whom nothing could divide.

And ye, who rather than resign
Your matrimonial plan ;
Were not afraid to plough the brine,
In company with man.

To whose lean country, much disdain
We English often show;
Yet from a richer, nothing gain
But wantonness and woe.

Be it your fortune, year by year,
The same resource to prove;
And may ye, sometimes landing here,
Instruct us how to love!

This tale is founded on an anecdote which the author found in the Buckinghamshire Herald, for Saturday, June 1, 1793, in the following words,

Glasgow, May 23.

In a block or pully, near the head of the mast of a gabert, now lying at the Broomielaw, there is chaffinch's nest and four eggs, The nest was built while the vessel lay at Greenock, and was followed hither by both birds. Though the block is occasionally lowered for the inspection of the curious, the birds have not forsaken the nest. The cock however visits the nest but seldom, while the hen never leaves it, but when she descends to the hulk for food.

STANZAS,

ADDRESSED TO LADY HESKETH,

BY A LADY,

IN RETURNING A POEM OF MR. COWPER'S,

Lent to the writer, on condition she should neither shew it, nor take a copy.

WHAT wonder ! if my wavering hand
Had dar'd to disobey,
When Hesketh gave a harsh command,
And Cowper led astray.

Then take this tempting gift of thine,
By pen uncopied yet !
But canst thou memory confine,
Or teach me to forget ?

More lasting than the touch of art,
Her characters remain ;
When written by a feeling heart
On tablets of the brain.

COWPER's REPLY.

To be remember'd thus is fame,
And in the first degree;
And did the few, like her, the same,
The press might rest for me.

So Homer in the memory stor'd
Of many a Grecian belle,
Was once preserv'd---a richer hoard,
But never lodg'd so well!

APPENDIX.

No. 2.

TRANSLATIONS of GREEK VERSES.

FROM THE GREEK OF JULIANUS.

A SPARTAN, his companion slain,
Alone from battle fled,
His mother, kindling with disdain
That she had borne him, struck him dead;

For courage, and not birth alone,
In Sparta, testifies a son!

ON THE SAME, BY PALLADAS.

A SPARTAN 'scaping from the fight,
His mother met him in his flight,
Upheld a faulchion to his breast,
And thus the fugitive address'd:

" Thou canst but live to blot with shame
" Indelible thy mother's name,
" While ev'ry breath that thou shalt draw,
" Offends against thy country's law;
" But, if thou perish by this hand,
" Myself indeed throughout the land,
" To my dishonour shall be known
" The mother still of such a son,
" But Sparta will be safe and free,
" And that shall serve to comfort me."

AN EPITAPH.

MY name—my country—what are they to thee?
What, whether base or proud, my pedigree?
Perhaps I far surpass'd all other men——
Perhaps I fell below them all—what then?
Suffice it, stranger! that thou see'st a tomb——
Thou know'st its use—it hides—no matter whom.

ANOTHER.

TAKE to thy bosom, gentle earth, a swain
With much hard labour in thy service worn:
He set the vines, that clothe yon ample plain,
And he these olives, that the vale adorn.

He fill'd with grain the glebe, the rills he led,
Through this green herbage and those fruitful bow'rs,
Thou, therefore, earth! lie lightly on his head,
His hoary head, and deck his grave with flow'rs.

ANOTHER.

PAINTER, this likeness is too strong,
And we shall mourn the dead too long.

ANOTHER.

AT three-score winters' end I died
A cheerless being, sole and sad,
The nuptial knot I never tied,
And wish my father never had.

BY CALLIMACHUS.

AT morn we placed on his funereal bier
Young Melanippus; and at even-tide,
Unable to sustain a loss so dear,
By her own hand his blooming sister died.

Thus Aristippus mourn'd his noble race,
Annihilated by a double blow,
Nor son could hope, nor daughter more t'embrace,
And all Cyrene sadden'd at his woe.

ON MILTIADES.

MILTIADES! thy valour best
(Although in every region known)
The men of Persia can attest,
Taught by thyself at Marathon.

ON AN INFANT.

BEWAIL not much, my parents! Me, the prey
Of ruthless Ades, and sepulcher'd here,
An infant, in my fifth scarce finish'd year,
He found all sportive, innocent, and gay,
Your young Callimachus; and if I knew
Not many joys, my griefs were also few.

BY HERACLIDES.

IN Cnidus born, the consort I became
Of Euphron. Aretimias was my name.
His bed I shared, nor proved a barren bride,
But bore two children at a birth, and died.
One child I leave to solace and uphold
Euphron hereafter, when infirm and old.
And one, for his remembrance sake, I bear
To Pluto's realm, till he shall join me there.

ON THE REED.

I Was of late a barren plant
Useless, insignificant.
Nor fig, nor grape, nor apple bore,
A native of the marshy shore,
But gather'd for poetic use,
And plung'd into a sable juice,
Of which my modicum I sip,
with narrow mouth, and slender lip,
At once although by nature dumb,
All eloquent I have become,
And speak with fluency untired,
As if by Phœbus' self inspired.

TO HEALTH.

ELDEST-born of pow'rs divine !
Blest Hygeia ! be it mine
To enjoy what thou canst give,
And henceforth with thee to live,
For in pow'r if pleasure be,
Wealth, or num'rous progeny,

Or in amorous embrace,
Where no spy infests the place;
Or in aught that Heav'n bestows
To alleviate human woes.
When the wearied heart despairs,
Of a respite from its cares;
These and ev'ry true delight
Flourish only in thy sight.
And the sister Graces Three
Owe, themselves, their youth to thee,
Without whom we may possess
Much, but never happiness.

ON THE ASTROLOGERS.

TH' Astrologers did all alike presage
My uncle's dying in extreme old age,
One only disagreed. But he was wise,
And spoke not till he heard the fun'ral cries.

ON AN OLD WOMAN.

MYCILLA dyes her locks 'tis said,
But 'tis a foul aspersion,
She buys them black, they therefore need
No subsequent immersion.

ON INVALIDES.

FAR happier are the dead, methinks then they
Who look for death, and fear it ev'ry day.

ON FLATTERERS.

NO mischief worthier of our fear
In nature can be found,
Than friendship, in ostent sincere,
But hollow and unsound.
For lull'd into a dangerous dream
We close infold a foe,
Who strikes when most secure we seem,
Th' inevitable blow.

TO THE SWALLOW.

ATTIC maid! with honey fed,
Bear'st thou to thy callow brood
Yonder locust from the mead
Destin'd their delicious food?

Ye have kindred voices clear
Ye alike unfold the wing,
Migrate hither, sojourn here,
Both attendant on the spring.

Ah for pity drop the prize;
Let it not, with truth, be said
That a songster gasps and dies,
That a songster may be fed.

ON LATE ACQUIRED WEALTH.

POOR in my youth, and in life's later scenes
Rich to no end, I curse my natal hour;
Who nought enjoyed, while young, denied the means;
And nought, when old, enjoy'd, denied the pow'r.

ON A TRUE FRIEND.

HAST thou a friend? Thou hast indeed
A rich and large supply,
Treasure to serve your ev'ry need,
Well managed, till you die.

ON A BATH, BY PLATO.

DID Cytherea to the skies
From this pellucid lymph arise?
Or was it Cytherea's touch,
When bathing here, that made it such?

ON A FOWLER, BY ISIODORUS.

WITH seeds and bird-lime, from the desert air,
Eumelus gather'd free, though scanty fare.
No lordly patron's hand he deign'd to kiss,
Nor luxury knew, save liberty, nor bliss,
Thrice thirty years he liv'd, and to his heirs
His seeds bequeath'd, his bird-lime, and his snares.

ON NIOBE.

CHARON! receive a family on board
Itself sufficient for thy crazy yawl,
Apollo and Diana, for a word
By me too proudly spoken, slew us all.

ON A GOOD MAN.

TRAV'LLER regret not me; for thou shalt find
Just cause of sorrow none in my decease,
Who dying, childrens' children left behind,
And with one wife liv'd many a year in peace:
Three virtuous youths espous'd my daughters three,
And oft their infants in my bosom lay,
Nor saw I one of all deriv'd from me
Touch'd with disease, or torn by death away.
Their duteous hands my fun'ral rites bestow'd,
And me my blameless manners fitted well
To seek it, sent to the serene abode
Where shades of pious men for ever dwell.

ON A MISER.

THEY call thee rich—I deem thee poor,
Since if thou dar'st not use thy store,
But sav'st it only for thine heirs
The treasure is not thine, but theirs.

ANOTHER.

A Miser, traversing his house,
Espied, unusual there, a mouse,
And thus his uninvited guest,
Briskly inquisitive, address'd:
" Tell me, my dear, to what cause is it
" I owe this unexpected visit?"
The mouse her host obliquely eyed,
And smiling, pleasantly replied,
" Fear not, good fellow, for your hoard,
" I come to lodge, and not to board."

ANOTHER.

ART thou some individual of a kind
Long-liv'd by nature as the rook, or hind?

Heap treasure then, for if thy need be such,
Thou hast excuse, and scarce canst heap too much.
But man thou seem'st, clear therefore from thy breast
This lust of treasure—folly at the best!
For why should'st thou go wasted to the tomb,
To fatten with thy spoils, thou know'st not whom?

ON FEMALE INCONSTANCY.

RICH, thou hadst many lovers—poor, hast none,
So surely want extinguishes the flame,
And she who call'd thee once her pretty one,
And her Adonis, now enquires thy name.

Where wast thou born Sosicrates, and where
In what strange country can thy parents live,
Who seem'st, by thy complaints, not yet aware
That want's a crime, no woman can forgive?

ON THE GRASSHOPPER.

HAPPY songster; perch'd above
On the summit of the grove,

Whom a dew-drop cheers to sing
With the freedom of a king.
From thy perch, survey the fields,
Where prolific nature yields
Nought that willingly as she,
Man surrenders not to thee.
For hostility or hate
None thy pleasures can create.
Thee it satisfies to sing,
Sweetly the return of spring,
Herald of the genial hours,
Harming neither herbs nor flow'rs.
Therefore man thy voice attends
Gladly—thou and he are friends;
Nor thy never-ceasing strains
Phœbus or the muse disdains
As too simple or too long,
For shemselves inspire the song.
Earth-born, bloodless, undecaying,
Ever singing, sporting, playing,
What has nature else to show
Godlike in its kind as thou?

ON HERMOCRATIA.

HERMOCRATIA named——save only one——
Twice fifteen births I bore and buried none.
For neither Phœbus pierced my thriving joys,
Nor Dian——she my girls, or he my boys.
But Dian rather, when my daughters lay
In parturition, chas'd their pangs away.
And all my sons, by Phœbus' bounty, shared
A vig'rous youth, by sickness unimpaired.
Oh Niobe! far less prolific! see
Thy boast against Latona sham'd by me!

FROM MENANDER.

FOND youth! who dream'st that horded gold,
Is needful, not alone to pay
For all thy various items sold
To serve the wants of every day.

Bread, vinegar, and oil, and meat,
For sav'ry viands season'd high,
But somewhat more important yet——
I tell thee what it cannot buy.

No treasure, hadst thou more amass'd
Than fame to Tantalus assign'd,
Would save thee from the tomb at last
But thou must leave it all behind.

I give thee, therefore, counsel wise;
Confide not vainly in thy store,
However large——much less despise
Others comparatively poor!

But in thy more exalted state
A just and equal temper show,
That all who see thee rich and great
May deem thee worthy to be so!

ON PALLAS BATHING,

FROM A HYMN OF CALLIMACHUS.

NOR oils of balmy scent produce,
Nor mirror for Minerva's use.
Ye nymphs who lave her; she array'd
In genuine beauty, scorns their aid.

Not even when they left the skies
To seek on Ida's head the prize
From Paris' hand, did Juno deign,
Or Pallas in the chrystal plain
Of Simois' stream her locks to trace,
Or in the mirror's polished face,
Though Venus oft with anxious care
Adjusted twice a single hair.

TO DEMOSTHENIS.

IT flatters and deceives thy view,
This mirror of ill polish'd ore!
For were it just, and told thee true,
Thou would'st consult it never more.

ON A SIMILAR CHARACTER.

YOU give your cheeks a rosy stain,
With washes dye your hair,
But paint and washes both are vain
To give a youthful air.

Those wrinkles mock your daily toil,
No labour will efface 'em,
You wear a mask of smoothest oil,
Yet still with ease we trace 'em.

An art so fruitless then forsake,
Which though you much excel in,
You never can contrive to make
Old Hecuba young Helen.

ON AN UGLY FELLOW.

BEWARE, my friend! of chrystal brook
Or fountain, lest that hideous hook,
Thy nose, thou chance to see,
Narcissus' fate would then be thine,
And self-detested thou would'st pine
As self-enamour'd he.

ON A BATTERED BEAUTY.

HAIR, wax, rouge, honey, teeth, you buy,
A multifarious store!
A mask at once would all supply,
Nor would it cost you more.

ON A THIEF.

WHEN Aulus, the nocturnal thief, made prize
Of Hermes, swift-wing'd envoy of the skies,
Hermes, Arcadia's king, the thief divine,
Who, when an infant stole Apollo's kine,
And whom, as arbiter and overseer
Of our gymnastic sports, we planted here.
"Hermes," he cried, "you meet no new disaster;
"Oftimes the pupil goes beyond his master."

ON PEDIGREE, FROM EPICHARMUS.

MY mother! if thou love me, name no more
My noble birth! Sounding at every breath

My noble birth thou kill'st me. Thither fly,
As to their only refuge, all from whom
Nature withholds all good besides; *they* boast
Their noble birth, conduct us to the tombs
Of their forefathers, and from age to age
Ascending, trumpet their illustrious race:
But whom hast thou beheld, or canst thou name
Deriv'd from no forefathers? Such a man
Lives not; for how could such be born at all?
And if it chance, that native of a land
Far distant, or in infancy depriv'd
Of all his kindred, one, who *cannot* trace
His origin, exist, why deem him sprung
From baser ancestry than theirs, who *can?*
My mother! He, whom nature at his birth
Endow'd with virtuous qualities, although
An Æthiop and a slave, is nobly born.

ON ENVY.

PITY, says the Theban bard,
From my wishes I discard.
Envy! let me rather be
Rather far a theme for thee!

Pity to distress is shewn:
Envy to the great alone——
So the Theban---But to shine
Less conspicuous be mine!
I prefer the golden mean
Pomp and penury between.
For alarm and peril wait
Ever on the loftiest state,
And the lowest, to the end,
Obloquy and scorn attend.

BY PHILEMON.

OFT we enhance our ills by discontent,
And give them bulk beyond what nature meant.
A parent, brother, friend deceas'd, to cry—
"He's dead indeed, but he was born to die."
Such temperate grief is suited to the size,
And burthen of the loss, is just and wise.
But to exclaim, "Ah! wherefore was I born,
"Thus to be left for ever thus forlorn?"
Who thus laments his loss, invites distress,
And magnifies a woe that might be less

Through dull despondence to his lot resign'd,
And leaving reason's remedy behind.

BY MOSCHUS.

I Slept, when Venus entered : to my bed
A Cupid in her beauteous hand she led,
A bashful-seeming boy, and thus she said :
"Shepherd receive my little one ! I bring
"An untaught love, whom thou must teach to sing."
She said, and left him, I suspecting nought
Many a sweet strain my subtle pupil taught,
How reed to reed Pan first with ozier bound,
How Pallas form'd the pipe of softest sound,
How Hermes gave the lute; and how the quire
Of Phœbus owe to Phœbus' self the lyre.
Such were my themes ; my themes nought heeded he,
But ditties sang of am'rous sort to me,
The pangs that mortals and immortals prove
From Venus' influence, and the darts of love.
Thus was the teacher by the pupil taught
His lessons I retain'd, and mine forgot.

APPENDIX.

No. 3.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM HORACE AND VIRGIL.

THE FIFTH SATIRE

OF THE

FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.

(Printed in Duncomb's Horace)

A humourous description of the author's journey from

ROME TO BRUNDUSIUM.

'TWAS a long journey lay before us,
When I, and honest Heliodorus,
Who far in point of rhetoric,
Surpasses ev'ry living Greek,
Each leaving our respective home
Together sally'd forth from Rome.

First at Aricia we alight,
And there refresh, and pass the night,
Our entertainment rather coarse
Than sumptuous, but I've met with worse.
Thence o'er the causeway soft and fair
To Appiiforum we repair.
But as this road is well supply'd
(Temptation strong!) on either side
With inns commodious, snug, and warm,
We split the journey, and perform
In two days time what's often done
By brisker travellers in one.
Here, rather choosing not to sup
Than with bad water mix my cup,
After a warm debate in spite
Of a provoking appetite,
I sturdily resolv'd at last
To balk it, and pronounce a fast,
And in a moody humour wait,
While my less dainty comrades bait.

Now o'er the spangled hemisphere
Diffus'd, the starry train appear,
When there arose a desp'rate brawl:
The slaves and bargemen, one and all,

Rending their throats (have mercy on us!)
As if they were resolv'd to stun us.
" Steer the barge this way to the shore;
" I tell you, we'll admit no more ;
" Plague, will you never be content ?
Thus a whole hour at least is spent,
While they receive the sev'ral fares,
And kick the mule into his gears.
Happy, these difficulties past,
Could we have fall'n asleep at last !
But, what with humming, croaking, biting,
Gnats, frogs, and all their plagues uniting,
These tuneful natives of the lake
Conspir'd to keep us broad awake.
Besides, to make the concert full
Two maudlin wights, exceeding dull,
The bargeman and a passenger,
Each in his turn, essay'd an air
In honour of his absent fair.
At length the passenger, opprest
With wine, left off, and snor'd the rest.
The weary bargeman too gave o'er,
And hearing his companion snore,

Seiz'd the occasion, fix'd the barge,
Turn'd out his mule to graze at large,
And slept forgetful of his charge.
And now the sun o'er eastern hill,
Discover'd, that our barge stood still;
When one, whose anger vex'd him sore,
With malice fraught, leaps quick on shore;
Plucks up a stake, with many a thwack
Assails the mule and driver's back.

Then slowly moving on with pain,
At ten Feronia's stream we gain,
And in her pure and glassy wave
Our hands and faces gladly lave.
Climbing three miles, fair Anxur's height
We reach, with stony quarries white.
While here, as was agreed, we wait,
'Till charg'd with business of the state,
Mæcenas and Cocceius come,
The messengers of peace from Rome.
My eyes, by wa'try humours blear
And sore, I with black balsam smear.
At length they join us, and with them
Our worthy friend Fonteius came.

A man of such complete desert,
Antony lov'd him at his heart.
At Fundi we refus'd to bait,
And laugh'd at vain Aufidius' state.
A prætor now, a scribe before,
The purple-border'd robe he wore,
His slave the smoking censer bore.
Tir'd, at Muræna's we repose,
At Formia sup at Capito's.

With smiles the rising morn we greet,
At Sinuessa pleas'd to meet
With Plotius, Varius, and the bard,
Whom Mantua first with wonder heard.
The world no purer spirits knows,
For none my heart more warmly glows.
Oh! what embraces we bestow'd,
And with what joy our breasts o'erflow'd!
Sure, while my sense is sound and clear,
Long as I live, I shall prefer
A gay, good natur'd, easy friend,
To every blessing Heav'n can send.
At a small village the next night
Near the Vulturnus we alight;

Where, as employ'd on state affairs,
We were supply'd by the purvey'rs
Frankly at once, and without hire,
With food for man and horse, and fire.
Capua next day betimes we reach,
Where Virgil and myself, who each
Labour'd with different maladies,
His such a stomach, mine such eyes,
As would not bear strong exercise,
In drowsy mood to sleep resort;
Mæcenas to the tennis-court.
Next at Cocceius' farm we're treated,
Above the Caudian tavern seated;
His kind and hospitable board
With choice of wholesome food was stor'd.

Now, O ye nine, inspire my lays!
To nobler themes my fancy raise!
Two combatants, who scorn to yield
The noisy, tongue-disputed field,
Sarmentus and Cicirrus, claim
A poet's tribute to their fame;
Cicirrus of true Oscian breed,
Sarmentus, who was never freed,

But ran away. We don't defame him.
His lady lives, and still may claim him.
Thus dignified, in harder fray
These champions their keen wit display,
And first Sarmentus led the way.
" Thy locks, (quoth he) so rough and coarse,
" Look like the mane of some wild horse."
We laugh: Cicirrus undismay'd——
" Have at you!"—cries, and shakes his head.
" 'Tis well (Sarmentus says) you've lost
" That horn your forehead once could boast;
" Since, maim'd and mangled as you are,
" You seem to butt." A hideous scar
Improv'd ('tis true) with double grace
The native horrors of his face.
Well. After much jocosely said
Of his grim front, so fi'ry red,
(For carbuncles had blotch'd it o'er,
As usual on Campania's shore)
" Give us, (he cry'd) since you are so big,
A sample of the Cyclops' jig.
" Your shanks methinks no buskins ask,
" Nor does your phyz require a mask."
To this Cicirrus. " In return
" Of you, Sir, now I fain would learn,

" When 'twas, no longer deem'd a slave,
" Your chains you to the Lares gave.
" For tho' a scriv'ner's right you claim,
" Your lady's title is the same.
" But what could make you run away,
" Since, pigmy as you are, each day
" A single pound of bread would quite
" O'erpow'r your puny appetite?"
Thus jok'd the champions, while we laugh'd,
And many a cheerful bumper quaff'd.

To Beneventum next we steer;
Where our good host by over care
In roasting thrushes lean as mice
Had almost fall'n a sacrifice.
The kitchen soon was all on fire,
And to the roof the flames aspire.
There might you see each man and master
Striving amidst this sad disaster,
To save the supper. Then they came
With speed enough to quench the flame.
From hence we first at distance see
Th' Apulian hills, well known to me,
Parch'd by the sultry western blast;
And which we never should have past;

Had not Trivicius by the way
Receiv'd us at the close of day.
But each was forc'd at ent'ring here
To pay the tribute of a tear,
For more of smoke than fire was seen——
The hearth was pil'd with logs so green.
From hence in chaises we were carry'd
Miles twenty-four, and gladly tarry'd
At a small town, whose name my verse
(So barb'rous is it) cant rehearse.
Know it you may by many a sign.
Water is dearer far than wine.
Their bread is deem'd such dainty fare,
That ev'ry prudent traveller
His wallet loads with many a crust
For at Canusium you might just
As well attempt to gnaw a stone
As think to get a morsel down.
That too with scanty streams is fed,
Its founder was brave Diomed.
Good Varius (ah, that friends must part!)
Here left us all with aching heart.
At Rubi we arriv'd that day.
Well jaded by the length of way.

And sure poor mortals ne'er were wetter,
Next day no weather could be better.
No roads so bad; we scarce could crawl
Along to fishy Barium's wall.
Th' Egnatians next, who by the rules
Of common sense are knaves or fools
Made all our sides with laughter heave,
Since we with them must needs believe,
That incense in their temples burns,
And without fire to ashes turns.
To circumcision's bigots tell
Such tales! For me, I know full well,
That in high Heav'n, unmov'd by care,
The Gods eternal quiet share:
Nor can I deem their spleen the cause,
Why fickle nature breaks her laws.
Brundusium last we reach: and there
Stop short the muse and traveller.

THE NINTH SATIRE

OF THE

FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.

THE

DESCRIPTION OF AN IMPERTINENT.

ADAPTED TO THE PRESENT TIMES.

1759.

SAUNT'RING along the street one day,
On trifles musing by the way——
Up steps a free familiar wight,
(I scarcely knew the man by sight.)
" Carlos, (he cried) your hand my dear,
" Gad, I rejoice to meet you here!
" Pray Heav'n I see you well!" " So, so;
" Ev'n well enough as times now go.
" The same good wishes, Sir, to you."
Finding he still pursued me close——
" Sir, you have business I suppose."

" My business, Sir, is quickly done.
" 'Tis but to make my merit known.
" Sir, I have read"——" O learned Sir,
" You and your learning I revere."
Then, sweating with anxiety,
And sadly longing to get free,
Gods, how I scamper'd, scuffled for't,
Ran, halted, ran again, stopp'd short,
Beckon'd my boy, and pull'd him near,
And whisper'd nothing in his ear!

Teiz'd with his loose unjointed chat——
" What street is this? What house is that?"
O Harlow, how I envy'd thee
Thy unabash'd effrontery,
Who dar'st a foe with freedom blame,
And call a coxcomb by his name!
When I return'd him answer none,
Obligingly the fool ran on,
" I see you're dismally distrest,
" Would give the world to be releas'd.
" But by your leave, Sir, I shall still
" Stick to your skirts, do what you will.
" Pray which way does your journey tend?"
" Oh tis a tedious way, my friend,

" Across the Thames, the Lord knows where.
" I would not trouble you so far."
" Well. I'm at leisure to attend you."
" Are you? (Thought I) the De'il befriend you."
No ass with double panniers rack'd,
Oppress'd, o'erladen, broken-back'd,
E'er look'd a thousandth part so dull
As I, nor half so like a fool.
" Sir, I know little of myself,
(Proceeds the pert conceited elf)
" If Gray or Mason you will deem
" Than me more worthy your esteem.
" Poems I write by folios
" As fast as other men write prose.
" Then I can sing so loud, so clear,
" That Beard cannot with me compare.
" In dancing too I all supass,
" Not Cooke can move with such a grace."
Here I made shift with much ado
To interpose a word or two.——
" Have you no parents, Sir, no friends,
" Whose welfare on your own depends?"
" Parents, relations, say you? No.
" They're all dispos'd of long ago."——

" Happy to be no more perplex'd !
" My fate too threatens, I go next.
" Dispatch me, Sir, tis now too late,
" Alas ! to struggle with my fate !
" Well, I'm convinc'd my time is come.——
" When young a gipsy told my doom,
" The beldame shook her palsy'd head,
" As she perus'd my palm, and said :
" Of poison, pestilence, or war,
" Gout, stone, defluxion, or catarrh,
" You have no reason to beware.
" Beware the coxcomb's idle prate ;
" Chiefly, my son, beware of that.
" Be sure, when you behold him, fly
" Out of all ear-shot, or you die."

To Rufus' Hall we now draw near.
Where he was summon'd to appear,
Refute the charge the plaintiff brought,
Or suffer judgment by default.
" For Heaven's sake, if you love me, wait
" One moment ! I'll be with you straight."
Glad of a plausible pretence—
" Sir, I must beg you to dispense

" With my attendance in the court.
" My legs will surely suffer for't."——
" Nay, prythee, Carlos, stop awhile !"
" Faith, Sir, in law I have no skill.
" Besides I have no time to spare,
" I must be going, you know where,"
" Well, I protest, I'm doubtful now,
" Whether to leave my suit or you !"
" Me without scruple !" (I reply)
" Me by all means, Sir,"—" No not I.
" *Allons, Monsieur !*" 'Twere vain (you know)
To strive with a victorious foe.
So I reluctantly obey,
And follow, where he leads the way.

" You, and Newcastle are so close ;
" Still hand and glove, Sir—I suppose.——
" Newcastle (let me tell you, Sir)
" Has not his equal every where."—
" Well. There indeed your fortune's made.
" Faith, Sir, you understand your trade.
" Would you but give me your good word !
" Just introduce me to my Lord.
" I should serve charmingly by way
" Of second fiddle, as they say :

" What think you, Sir? 'twere a good jest,
" 'Slife, we should quickly scout the rest."—
" Sir, you mistake the matter far,
" We have no second fiddles there.
" Richer than I some folks may be;"
" More learned, but it hurts not me.
" Friends tho' he has of diff'rent kind,
" Each has his proper place assign'd."
" Strange matters these alledg'd by you!"—
" Strange they may be, but they are true."—
" Well then, I vow 'tis mighty clever,
" Now I long ten times more than ever
" To be advanced extremely near
" One of his shining character.
" Have but the will—there wants no more,
" 'Tis plain enough you have the pow'r.
" His easy temper (that's the worst)
" He knows, and is so shy at first.
" But such a cavalier as you—
" Lord, Sir, you'll quickly bring him to!"—
" Well; if I fail in my design,
" Sir, it shall be no fault of mine.
" If by the saucy servile tribe
" Deny'd, what think you of a bribe?

" Shut out to-day, not die with sorrow,
" But try my luck again to-morrow.
" Never attempt to visit him
" But at the most convenient time,
" Attend him on each levee day,
" And there my humble duty pay.
" Labour, like this, our want supplies;
" And they must stoop, who mean to rise."

While thus he wittingly harangu'd,
For which you'll guess I wish'd him hang'd,
Campley, a friend of mine came by,
Who knew his humour more than I,
We stop, salute, and——" why so fast,
" Friend Carlos?—Whither all this haste?
Fir'd at the thoughts of a reprieve,
I pinch him, pull him, twich his sleeve,
Nod, beckon, bite my lips, wink, pout,
Do ev'ry thing but speak plain out:
While he, sad dog, from the beginning
Determin'd to mistake my meaning;
Instead of pitying my curse,
By jeering made it ten times worse.
" Campley, what secret (pray!) was that
" You wanted to communicate?"

" I recollect. But tis no matter.
" Carlos, we'll talk of that herea'ter.
" E'en let the secret rest. 'Twill tell
" Another time, Sir, just as well."

Was ever such a dismal day?
Unlucky cur, he steals away,
And leaves me, half bereft of life,
At mercy of the butcher's knife;
When sudden, shouting from afar,
See his antagonist appear!
The bailiff seiz'd him quick as thought,
" Ho, Mr. Scoundrel! Are you caught?
" Sir, you are witness to th' arrest.
" Aye marry, Sir, I'll do my best."
The mob huzzas. Away they trudge,
Culprit and all, before the judge.
Meanwhile I luckily enough
(Thanks to Apollo!) got clear off.

THE SALLAD.

BY VIRGIL.

This singular poem, which the learned and judicious Heyne seems inclined to think a translation of Virgil's, from the Greek of Parthenius, was translated into English by Cowper, during his oppressive malady, June 1799; and to those, who are used to philosophize on the powers of the human mind under affliction, it will appear a highly interesting curiosity.

I find in the second volume of the St. James's Magazine, published in 1763, by Lloyd, the early friend of Cowper, another version of this poem in rhyme——it has only the initials of the author prefixed——R. T.

THE winter-night now well-nigh worn away,
The wakeful cock proclaim'd approaching day,
When Simulus, poor tenant of a farm
Of narrowest limits, heard the shrill alarm,
Yawn'd, stretch'd his limbs, and anxious to provide
Against the pangs of hunger unsupplied,

By slow degrees his tatter'd bed forsook,
And poking in the dark explor'd the nook
Where embers slept with ashes heap'd around,
And with burnt fingers-ends the treasure found.

It chanc'd that from a brand beneath his nose,
Sure proof of latent fire, some smoke arose;
When trimming with a pin th' incrusted tow,
And stooping it towards the coals below,
He toils, with cheeks distended, to excite
The ling'ring flame, and gains at length a light.
With prudent heed he spreads his hand before
The quiv'ring lamp, and opes his gran'ry door.
Small was his stock, but taking for the day,
A measur'd stint of twice eight pounds away,
With these, his mill he seeks. A shelf at hand,
Fixt in the wall, affords his lamp a stand:
Then baring both his arms—a sleeveless coat
He girds, the rough exuviæ of a goat;
And with a rubber, for that use design'd,
Cleansing his mill within—begins to grind;
Each hand has its employ; lab'ring amain,
This turns the wince, while that supplies the grain.
The stone revolving rapidly, now glows,
And the bruis'd corn, a mealy current flows;

While he, to make his heavy labour light,
Tasks oft his left hand to relieve his right.
And chaunts with rudest accent, to beguile
His ceaseless toil, as rude a strain the while,
And now, dame Cybale come forth! he cries;
But Cybale, still slumb'ring, nought replies.

From Afric she, the swain's sole serving-maid,
Whose face and form alike her birth betray'd.
With woolly locks, lips tumid, sable skin,
Wide bosom, udders flacid, belly thin,
Legs slender, broad and most mishapen feet,
Chapp'd into chinks, and parch'd with solar heat.
Such, summon'd oft, she came; at his command
Fresh fuel heap'd, the sleeping embers fann'd,
And made in haste her simm'ring skillet steam,
Replenish'd newly from the neighbouring stream.

The labours of the mill perform'd, a sieve
The mingled flour and bran must next receive,
Which shaken oft, shoots Ceres through refin'd,
And better dress'd, her husks all left behind.
This done, at once, his future plain repast,
Unleaven'd, on a shaven board he cast,

With tepid lymph, first largely soak'd it all,
Then gather'd it with both hands to a ball,
Then spreading it again with both hands wide,
With sprinkled salt the stiffen'd mass supplied;
At length, the stubborn substance, duly wrought,
Takes from his palms impress'd the shape it ought,
Becomes an orb—and quarter'd into shares,
The faithful mark of just division bears.
Last, on his hearth it finds convenient space,
For Cybale before had swept the place,
And there, with tiles and embers overspread,
She leaves it—reeking in its sultry bed.

Nor Simulus, while Vulcan thus, alone
His part perform'd, proves heedless of his own,
But sedulous, not merely to subdue
His hunger, but to please his palate too,
Prepares more sav'ry food. His chimney-side
Could boast no gammon, salted well, and dried,
And hook'd behind him; but sufficient store
Of bundled annis, and a cheese it bore;
A broad round cheese, which, through its centre strung
With a tough broom-twig, in the corner hung,
The prudent hero therefore with address
And quick dispatch, now seeks another mess.

Close to his cottage lay a garden-ground,
With reeds and osiers sparely girt around,
Small was the spot, but lib'ral to produce;
Nor wanted aught that serves a peasant's use,
And sometimes e'en the rich would borrow hence,
Although its tillage was his sole expence.
For oft, as from his toils abroad he ceas'd,
Home-bound by weather, or some stated feast,
His debt of culture here he duly paid,
And only left the plough, to wield the spade.
He knew to give each plant the soil it needs,
To drill the ground and cover close the seeds;
And could with ease compel the wanton rill
To turn, and wind, obedient to his will.
There flourish'd star-wort, and the branching beet,
The sorrel acid, and the mallow sweet,
The skirret, and the leak's aspiring kind,
The noxious poppy——quencher of the mind!
Salubrious sequel of a sumptuous board,
The lettuce, and the long huge-bellied gourd;
But these (for none his appetite controul'd
With stricter sway) the thrifty rustic sold;
With broom-twigs neatly bound, each kind apart,
He bore them ever to the public mart;

Whence, laden still, but with a lighter load,
Of cash well-earn'd, he took his home-ward road,
Expending seldom, ere he quitted Rome,
His gains, in flesh-meat for a feast at home.
There, at no cost, on onions, rank and red,
Or the curl'd endive's bitter leaf, he fed:
On scallions slic'd, or with a sensual gust,
On rockets——foul provocatives of lust!
Nor even shunn'd, with smarting gums to press
Nasturtium——pungent face-distorting mess!

Some such regale now also in his thought,
With hasty steps his garden-ground he sought;
There delving with his hands, he first displac'd
Four plants of garlick, large, and rooted fast,
The tender tops of parsley next he culls,
Then the old rue-bush shudders as he pulls,
And coriander last to these succeeds,
That hangs on slightest threads her trembling seeds,

Plac'd near his sprightly fire he now demands
the mortar at his sable servant's hands;
When stripping all his garlick first, he tore
Th' exterior coats, and cast them on the floor,

Then cast away with like contempt the skin,
Flimsier concealment of the cloves within.
These search'd, and perfect found, he one by one,
Rinc'd, and dispos'd within the hollow stone.
Salt added, and a lump of salted cheese,
With his injected herbs he cover'd these,
And tucking with his left his tunic tight,
And seizing fast the pestle with his right,
The garlick bruising first he soon express'd,
And mix'd the various juices of the rest.
He grinds, and by degrees his herbs below
Lost in each other their own powers forego,
And with the cheese in compound, to the sight
Nor wholly green appear, nor wholly white.
His nostrils oft the forceful fume resent,
He curs'd full oft his dinner for its scent,
Or with wry faces, wiping as he spoke
The trickling tears, cried "vengeance on the smoke!"
The work proceeds: not roughly turns he now
The pestle, but in circles smooth and slow,
With cautious hand that grudges what it spills,
Some drops of olive-oil he next instills.
Then vinegar with caution scarcely less,
And gathering to a ball the medley mess,

Last, with two fingers frugally applied,
Sweeps the small remnant from the mortar's side.
And thus complete in figure and in kind,
Obtains at length the Sallad he design'd.

And now black Cybale before him stands,
The cake drawn newly glowing in her hands,
He glad receives it, chasing far away
All fears of famine, for the passing day;
His legs enclos'd in buskins, and his head
In its tough casque of leather, forth he led
And yok'd his steers, a dull obedient pair,
Then drove a-field, and plung'd the pointed share.

APPENDIX.

No. 4.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM VARIOUS LATIN POEMS OF VINCENT BOURNE;

And a few Epigrams of Owen.

THE THRACIAN.

THRACIAN parents at his birth,
Mourn their babe with many a tear,
But with undissembled mirth
Place him breathless on his bier.

THRAX.

THREICIUM infantem, cum lucem intravit et auras,
Fletibus excepit mæstus uterque parens.
Threicium infantem, cum luce exivit et auris
Extulit ad funus lætus uterque parens.

Greece and Rome, with equal scorn,
" Oh the savages! exclaim "
Whether they rejoice or mourn,
Well entitled to the name!

But the cause of this concern,
And this pleasure would they trace,
Even they might somewhat learn
From the savages of Thrace.

Reciprocal Kindness the primary Law of Nature.

ANDROCLES from his injur'd lord in dread
Of instant death, to Lybia's desert fled.

Interea tu Roma; et tu tibi Græcia plaudens,
Dicitis, hæc vera est Thraica barbaries.
Lætitiæ causam causamque exquirite luctus;
Vosque est quod doceat Thracia barbaries.

Mutua benevolentia primaria lex Naturæ est.

PER Libyæ Androcles siccas errabat arenas;
Qui vagus iratum fugerat exul herum.

Tir'd with his toilsome flight, and parch'd with heat,
He spied, at length, a cavern's cool retreat.
But scarce had given to rest his weary frame,
When, hugest of his kind, a lion came:
He roar'd approaching: but the savage din
To plaintive murmurs chang'd—arriv'd within
And with expressive looks, his lifted paw
Presenting, aid implor'd from whom he saw;
The fugitive, through terror at a stand,
Dar'd not awhile afford his trembling hand,
But bolder grown, at length inherent found
A pointed thorn, and drew it from the wound.

Lassato tandem fractoque labore viarum,
Ad scopuli patuit cœca caverna latus.
Hanc subit; et placido dederat vix membra sopori
Cum subito immanis rugit ad antra Leo:
Ille pedem atollens læsum, et miserabile murmur
Edens, quâ poterat voce, precatur opem.
Perculsus novitate rei, incertusque timore,
Vix tandem tremulas admovet erro manus;
Et spinam explorans (nam fixa in vulnere spina
Hærebat) cauto molliter ungue trahit:
Continuo dolor omnis abit, teter fluit humor:
Et coit, absterso sanguine, rupta cutis:

The cure was wrought; he wip'd the sanious flood,
And firm and free from pain the lion stood.
Again he seeks the wilds, and day by day,
Regales his inmate with the parted prey.
Nor he disdains the dole, though unprepar'd,
Spread on the ground, and with a lion shar'd.
But thus to live---still lost---sequester'd still---
Scarce seem'd his lord's revenge an heavier ill.
Home! native home! Oh might he but repair!
He must---he will, though death attends him there.
He goes, and doom'd to perish, on the sands
Of the full theatre unpitied stands!

Nunc iterum sylvas dumosque peragrat; et affert
Providus assiduas hospes ad antra dapes.
Juxta epulis accumbit homo conviva Leonis,
Nec crudos dubitat participare cibos,
Quis tamen ista ferat desertæ tædia vitæ?
Vix furor ultoris tristior esset heri.
Devotum certis caput objectare periclis
Et patrios statuit rursus adire lares.
Traditur hic, fera facturus spectacula, plebi,
Accipit et miserum tristis arena reum.
Irruit e caveis fors idem impastus et acer,
Et medicum attonito suspicit ore Leo.

When Lo! the self-same lion from his cage
Flies to devour him, famish'd into rage.
He flies, but viewing in his purpos'd prey
The man, his healer, pauses on his way,
And soften'd by remembrance into sweet
And kind composure, crouches at his feet.

Mute with astonishment th' assembly gaze;
But why, ye Romans? Whence your mute amaze?
All this is nat'ral: nature bade him rend
An enemy; she bids him spare a friend.

Suspicit, et veterem agnoscens vetus hospes amicum
Decumbit notos blandulus ante pedes.
Quid vero perculsi animis, stupuere quirites?
Ecquid prodigii, territa Roma, vides?
Unius naturæ opus est; ea sola furorem
Sumere quæ jussit, ponere sola jubet.

A MANUAL,

More antient than the art of Printing, and not to be found in any Catalogue.

THERE is a book, which we may call
(Its excellence is such)
Alone a library, tho' small;
The ladies thumb it much.

Words none, things num'rous it contains:
And, things with words compar'd,
Who needs be told, that has his brains,
Which merits most regard?

Oftimes its leaves of scarlet hue
A golden edging boast;
And open'd, it displays to view
Twelve pages at the most.

Manuale Typographia omni antiquius nulli uspiam Librorum insertum catalogo.

EXIGUUS liber est, muliebri creber in usu,
Per se qui dici bibliotheca potest.

Nor name, nor title, stamp'd behind,
Adorns its outer part;
But all within 'tis richly lin'd,
A magazine of art.

The whitest hands that secret hoard
Oft visit: and the fair
Preserve it in their bosoms stor'd,
As with a miser's care.

Thence implements of every size;
And form'd for various use,
(They need but to consult their eyes)
They readily produce.

Copia verborum non est, sed copia rerum;
Copia (quod nemo deneget) utilior.
Rubris consuitur pannis; fors texitur auro;
Bis sexta ad summum pagina claudit opus.
Nil habet a tergo titulive aut nominis; intus
Thesauros artis servat, et intus opes:
Intus opes, quæ nympha sinu pulcherrima gestet,
Quas nive candidior tractet ametque manus.
Quando instrumentum præsens sibi postulat usus,
Majusve, aut operis pro ratione, minus.

The largest and the longest kind
Possess the foremost page,
A sort most needed by the blind,
Or nearly such from age.

The full-charg'd leaf, which next ensues,
Presents in bright array
The smaller sort, which matrons use,
Not quite so blind as they.

The third, the fourth, the fifth supply
What their occasions ask,
Who with a more discerning eye
Perform a nicer task.

But still with regular decrease
From size to size they fall,
In ev'ry leaf grows less, and less;
The last are least of all.

Et genere et modulo diversa habet arma, gradatim,
Digesta, ad numeros attenuata suos.
Primum enchiridii folium majuscula profert,
Qualia quæ blœso est lumine poscat anus

Oh! what a fund of genius, pent
In narrow space, is here!
This volume's method and intent
How luminous and clear!

It leaves no reader at a loss
Or pos'd, whoever reads;
No commentator's tedious gloss,
Nor even index needs.

Quod sequitur folium, matronis arma ministrat,
Dicere quæ magnis proximiora licet.
Tertium, item quartum, quintumque minuscula supplet,
Sed non ejusdem singula quœque loci.
Disposita ordinibus certis, discrimina servant;
Quæ sibi conveniant, seligat unde nurus.
Ultima quæ restant quæ multa minutula nympha
Dicit, sunt sexti divitiæ folii.
Quantillo in spatio doctrina O quanta latescit!
Quam tamen obscuram vix brevitate voces.
Non est interpres, non est commentarius ullus,
Aut index; tam sunt omnia perspicua.

Search Bodley's many thousands o'er!
No book is treasur'd there,
Nor yet in Granta's num'rous store
That may with this compare.

No!—Rival none in either host
Of this was ever seen,
Or, that contents could justly boast,
So brilliant and so keen.

Ætatem ad quamvis, ad captum ita fingitur omnem,
Ut nihil auxilii postulet inde liber.
Millia librorum numerat perplura; nec ullum
Bodlæi huic jactat bibliotheca parem.
Millia Cæsareo numerat quoque mumere Granta,
Hæc tamen est inter millia tale nihil.
Non est, non istis author de millibus unus,
Cui tanta ingenii vis, vel acumen inest.

AN ÆNIGMA.

A Needle small, as small can be,
In bulk and use, surpasses me,
Nor is my purchase dear;
For little, and almost for nought,
As many of my kind are bought
As days are in the year.

Yet though but little use we boast,
And are procur'd at little cost,
The labour is not light,
Nor few artificers it asks,
All skilful in their sev'ral tasks,
To fashion us aright.

ÆNIGMA.

PARVULA res, et acu minor est, et inceptior usu:
Quotque dies annus, tot tibi drachma dabit.
Sed licet exigni pretii minimique valoris,
Ecce, quot artificum postulat illa manus!

One fuses metal o'er the fire,
A second draws it into wire,
The sheers another plies,
Who clips in lengths the brazen thread
For him, who, chafing every shred,
Gives all an equal size.

A fifth prepares, exact and round,
The knob, with which it must be crown'd,
His follower makes it fast,
And with his mallet and his file
To shape the point, employs awhile
The seventh, and the last.

Now therefore, Œdipus! declare
What creature, wonderful, and rare,
A process, that obtains

Unius in primis cura est conflare metallum;
In longa alterius ducere fila labor.
Tertius in partes resecat, quartusque resectum
Perpolit ad modulos attenuatque datos,
Est quinti tornare caput, quod sextus adaptet;
Septimus in punctum cudit et exacuit.

Its purpose with so much ado,
At last produces!——tell me true,
And take me for your pains!

SPARROWS SELF-DOMESTICATED,

In Trinity College, Cambridge.

NONE ever shar'd the social feast,
Or as an inmate, or a guest,
Beneath the celebrated dome,
Where once Sir Isaac had his home,

His tandem auxiliis ita res procedit, ut omnes
Ad numeros ingens perficiatur opus.
Quæ tanti ingenii, quæ tanti est summa laboris?
Si mihi respondes Œdipe, tota tua est.

Passeres indigenæ Col. Trin. Cant. Commensales.

INCOLA qui nôrit sedes, aut viserit hospes,
Newtoni egregii quas celebravit honos;

Who saw not (and with some delight
Perhaps he view'd the novel sight)
How num'rous, at the tables there,
The sparrows beg their daily fare.
For there, in every nook, and cell,
Where such a family may dwell,
Sure as the vernal season comes
Their nests they weave in hope of crumbs,
Which kindly given, may serve with food
Convenient their unfeather'd brood;
And oft as with its summons clear,
The warning bell salutes their ear,
Sagacious list'ners to the sound,
They flock from all the fields around,

Viditque et meminit, lætus fortasse videndo,
Quam multa ad mensas advolitârit avis.
Ille nec ignorat, nidos ut, vere ineunte,
Tecta per et forulos, et tabulata struat.
Ut coram educat teneros ad pabula fœtus,
Et pascat micis, quas det amica manus.
Convivas quoties campanæ ad prandia pulsus
Convocat, haud epulis certior hospes adest.
Continuo jucunda simul vox fertur ad aures,
Vicinos passer quisque relinquit agros

To reach the hospitable hall,
None more attentive to the call.
Arriv'd the pensionary band,
Hopping and chirping, close at hand,
Solicit what they soon receive
The sprinkled, plenteous donative.
Thus is a multitude, though large,
Supported at a trivial charge;
A single doit would overpay
Th' expenditure of every day,
And who can grudge so small a grace
To suppliants, natives of the place?

Hospitium ad notum properatur; et ordine stantes
Expectant panis fragmina quisque sua.
Hos tamen, hos omnes, vix uno largor asse
Sumptus per totam pascit alitque diem.
Hunc unum, hunc modicum (nec quisquam inviderit assem)
Indigenæ, hospitii jure, merentur aves.

FAMILIARITY DANGEROUS.

AS in her ancient mistress' lap,
The youthful tabby lay,
They gave each other many a tap,
Alike dispos'd to play.

But strife ensues. Puss waxes warm,
And with protruded claws
Ploughs all the length of Lydia's arm,
Mere wantonness the cause.

At once, resentful of the deed,
She shakes her to the ground
With many a threat, that she shall bleed
With still a deeper wound.

Nulli te facias nimis sodalem.

PALPAT heram felis, gremio recubans in anili;
Quam semel atque iterum Lydia palpat hera.
Ludum lis sequitur; nam totos exerit ungues,
Et longo lacerat vulnere felis anum.
Continuo exardens gremio muliercula felem
Nec gravibus multis excutit absque minis.

But Lydia, bid thy fury rest;
It was a venial stroke:
For she, that will with kittens jest,
Should bear a kitten's joke.

INVITATION TO THE REDBREAST.

SWEET bird, whom the winter constrains——
And seldom another it can——
To seek a retreat, while he reigns,
In the well-shelter'd dwellings of man,
Who never canst seem to intrude,
Tho' in all places equally free,
Come, oft' as the season is rude!
Thou art sure to be welcome to me.

Quod tamen haud æquum est——si vult cum fele jocari,
Felinum debet Lydia ferre jocum.

Ad Rubeculam Invitatio.

HOSPES avis, conviva domo gratissima cuivis,
Quam bruma humanum quærere cogit opem;

At sight of the first feeble ray,
That pierces the clouds of the east,
To inveigle thee every day
My window shall shew thee a feast.
For, taught by experience, I know
Thee mindful of benefit long;
And that, thankful for all I bestow,
Thou wilt pay me with many a song.

Then, soon as the swell of the buds
Bespeaks the renewal of spring,
Fly hence, if thou wilt, to the woods,
Or where it thall please thee to sing:
And should'st thou, compell'd by a frost,
Come again to my window or door,
Doubt not an affectionate host!
Only pay, as thou pay'd'st me before.

Huc O! hyberni fugias ut frigora cœli,
Confuge, et incolumis sub lare vive meo!
Unde tuam esuriem releves, alimenta fenestræ
Apponam, quoties itque reditque dies.
Usu etenim edidici, quod grato alimenta rependes
Cantu, quæ dederit cunque benigna manus.

Thus music must needs be confest
To flow from a fountain above;
Else how should it work, in the breast,
Unchangeable friendship and love:
And who on the globe can be found,
Save your generation and ours,
That can be delighted by sound,
Or boast any musical pow'rs?

Vere novo tepidæ spirant cum molliter auræ,
Et novus in quâvis arbore vernat honos,
Pro libitu ad lucos redeas, sylvasque revisas,
Læta quibus resonat Musica, parque tuæ.
Sin iterum, sin forte iterum, inclementia brumæ
Ad mea dilectam tecta reducet avem
Esto, redux, grato memor esto rependere cantu
Pabula, quæ dederit cunque benigna manus.

Vis hinc harmoniæ, numerorum hinc sacra potestas
Conspicitur, nusquam conspicienda magis,
Vincula quod stabilis firmissima nectit amoris,
Vincula vix longâ dissocianda die.
Captat, et incantat blando oblectamine Musa
Humanum pariter pennigerumque genus;
Nos homines et aves quotcunque animantia vivunt,
Nos soli harmoniæ gens studiosa sumus.

STRADA's NIGHTINGALE.

THE shepherd touch'd his reed; sweet Philomel
Esssay'd, and oft essay'd to catch the strain,
And treasuring, as on her ear they fell,
The numbers, echo'd note for note again.

The peevish youth, who ne'er had found before
A rival of his skill, indignant heard,
And soon (for various was his tuneful store)
In loftier tones defy'd the simple bird.

She dar'd the task, and rising, as he rose,
With all the force, that passion gives, inspir'd,
Return'd the sounds awhile, but in the close,
Exhausted fell, and at his feet expir'd.

STRADÆ PHILOMELA.

PASTOREM audivit calamis Philomela canentem,
Et voluit tenues ipsa referre modos;
Ipsa retentavit numeros, didicitque retentans
Argutum fidâ reddere voce melos.
Pastor insuetus rivalem ferre, misellam

Thus strength, not skill prevail'd. O fatal strife,
By thee poor songstress playfully begun;
And O sad victory, which cost thy life,
And he may wish that he had never won!

ODE

ON THE DEATH OF A LADY,

Who lived one hundred years, and died on her birth day. 1728.

ANCIENT dame, how wide and vast,
To a race like ours appears,

Grandius ad carmen provocat, urget avem.
Tuque etiam in modulos surgis Philomela; sed impar
Viribus, heu impar, examinisque cadis.
Durum certamen! tristis victoria! cantum.
Maluerit pastor non superâsse tuum.

ANUS SÆCULARIS

Quæ justam centum annorum ætatem, ipso die natali, explevit, et clausit anno 1728.

SINGULARIS prodigium O senectæ,
Et novum exemplum diuturnitatis,

Rounded to an orb at last,
All thy multitude of years!

We, the herd of human kind,
Frailer and of feebler pow'rs;
We, to narrow bounds confin'd,
Soon exhaust the sum of ours.

Death's delicious banquet—we
Perish even from the womb,
Swifter than a shadow flee,
Nourish'd, but to feed the tomb.

Cujus annorum series in amplum
desinit orbem!

Vulgus infelix hominum, dies en!
Computo quam dispare computamus!
Quam tuâ a summâ procul est remota
summula nostra!

Pabulum nos luxuriesque lethi,
Nos simul nati, incipimus perire,
Nos statim a cunis cita destinamur
præda sepulchro!

Seeds of merciless disease
Lurk in all, that we enjoy;
Some, that waste us by degrees,
Some, that suddenly destroy.

And if life o'erleap the bourn,
Common to the sons of men;
What remains, but that we mourn,
Dream, and doat, and drivel then?

Fast as moons can wax and wain;
Sorrow comes; and while we groan,
Pant with anguish, and complain,
Half our years are fled and gone.

Occulit mors insidias, ubi vix
Vix opinari est, rapidæve febris
Vim repentinam, aut male pertinacis
semina morbi.

Sin brevem possit superare vita
Terminum, quicquid superest, vacivum,
Illud ignavis superest et imbe-
-cillibus annis.

If a few, (to few 'tis giv'n)
Linger on this earthly stage,
Creep and halt with steps unev'n,
To the period of an age.

Wherefore live they, but to see
Cunning, arrogance, and force;
Sights, lamented much by thee,
Holding their accustom'd course?

Oft' was seen, in ages past,
All that we with wonder view;
Often shall be to the last;
Earth produces nothing new.

Detrahunt multum, minuuntque sorti
Morbidi questus gemitusque anheli;
Ad parem crescunt numerum diesque
atque dolores

Si quis hæc vitet (quotus ille quisque est!)
Et gradu pergendo laborioso
Ad tuum, fortasse tuum, moretur
reptilis ævum:

Thee we gratulate; content,
Should propitious Heav'n design
Life for us, as calmly spent,
Though but half the length of thine.

At videt, mæstum tibi sæpe visum, in-
Jurias, vim, furta, dolos, et inso-
Lentiam, quo semper eunt, eodem
ire tenore.

Nil inest rebus novitatis; et quod
Uspiam est nugarum et ineptiarum,
Unius volvi videt, et revolvi
circulus ævi.

Integram ætatem tibi gratulamur;
Et dari nobis satis æstimamus,
Si tuam, saltem vacuam querelis
dimidiemus.

THE CAUSE WON.

TWO neighbours furiously dispute
A field, the subject of the suit.
Trivial the spot, yet such the rage,
With which the combatants engage,
'Twere hard to tell, who covets most
The prize——at whatsoever cost.
The pleadings swell. Words still suffice:
No single word but has its price.
No term but yields some fair pretence,
For novel and increas'd expence.

VICTORIA FORENSIS.

CAIO cum Titio lis et vexatio longa
Sunt de vicini proprietate soli.
Protinus ingentes animos in jurgia sumunt
Utraque vincendi pars studiosa nimis.
Lis tumet in schedulas, et jam verbosior, et jam:
Nec verbum quodvis asse minoris emunt.
Prætereunt menses, et terminus alter et alter;
Quisque novos sumptus, alter et alter, habent.

Defendant thus becomes a name,
Whch he, that bore it, may disclaim;
Since both, in one description blended,
Are plaintiffs——when the suit is ended.

THE SILK-WORM.

THE beams of April, ere it goes,
A worm, scarce visible, disclose;
All winter long content to dwell
The tenant of his native shell.
The same prolific season gives
The sustenance, by which he lives,

Illo querens, hic respondens pendente vocatur
Lite; sed, ad finim litis uterque querens.

BOMBYX.

FINE sub Aprilis Bombyx excluditur ovo
Reptilis exiguo corpore vermiculus.

The mulb'rry-leaf, a simple store,
That serves him——till he needs no more!
For, his dimensions once complete;
Thenceforth none ever sees him eat;
Tho', till his growing time be past,
Scarce ever is he seen to fast.
That hour arriv'd, his work begins.
He spins and weaves, and weaves and spins;
Till circle, upon circle wound
Careless around him and around,
Conceals him with a veil tho' slight,
Impervious to the keenest sight.
Thus self-enclos'd, as in a cask,
At length he finishes his task:

Frondibus hic mori, volvox dum fiat adultus,
Gnaviter incumbens, dum satietur, edit.
Crescendo ad justum cum jam maturuit ævum,
Incipit artifici stamine textor opus:
Filaque condensans filis, orbem implicat orbi
Et sensim in gyris conditus ipse latet.
Inque cadi teretem forman se colligit, unde
Egrediens pennas papilionis habet.

And, tho' a worm, when he was lost,
Or, caterpillar at the most,
When next we see him, wings he wears,
And in papilio-pomp appears;
Becomes oviparous; supplies
With future worms and future flies,
The next-ensuing year;—and dies!
Well were it for the world, if all,
Who creep about this earthly ball,
Though shorter-liv'd than most he be,
Were useful in their kind as he.

THE INNOCENT THIEF.

NOT a flow'r can be found in the fields,
Or the spot that we till for our pleasure,

Fitque parens tandem, fætumque reponit in ovis
Hoc demum extremo munere functus obit
Quotquot in hac nostrâ spirant animalia terrâ
Nulli est vel brevior vita, vel utilior.

INNOCENS PRÆDATRIX.

SEDULA per campos nullo defessa labore,
In cellâ ut stipet mella vagatur apis:

From the largest to least, but it yields
The bee, never-weary'd, a treasure.

Scarce any she quits unexplor'd,
With a diligence truly exact;
Yet, steal what she may for her hoard,
Leaves evidence none of the fact.

Her lucrative task she pursues,
And pilfers with so much address,
That none of their odour they lose,
Nor charm by their beauty the less.

Not thus inoffensively preys,
The canker-worm, in-dwelling foe!

Purpureum vix florem opifex prætervolat unum,
Innumeras inter quas alit hortus opes;
Herbula gramineis vix una innascitur agris,
Thesauri unde aliquid non studiosa legit.
A flore ad florem transit, mollique volando
Delibat tactu suave quod intus habent.
Omnia delibat, parcè sed et omnia, furti
Ut ne vel minimum videris indicium.

His voracity not thus allays
The sparrow, the finch, or the crow.

The worm, more expensively fed,
The pride of the garden devours;
And birds pick the seed from the bed,
Still less to be spar'd than the flow'rs.

But she, with such delicate skill,
Her pillage so fits for our use,
That the chymist in vain with his still
Would labour the like to produce.

Then grudge not her temperate meals,
Nor a benefit blame as a theft;

Omnia degustat tam parcè, ut gratia nulla
Floribus, ut nullus diminuatur odor.
Non ita prædantur modice bruchique et erucæ;
Non, ista hortorum maxima pestis, aves:
Non ita raptores corvi, quorum improba rostra
Despoliant agros, effodiuntque sata.
Succos immiscens succis, ita suaviter omnes
Temperat, ut dederit chymia nulla pares.

Since, stole she not all that she steals,
Neither honey, nor wax would be left.

DENNER's OLD-WOMAN.

IN this mimic form of a matron in years,
How plainly the pencil of Denner appears!
The matron herself, in whose old age we see
Not a trace of decline, what a wonder is she!
No dimness of eye, and no cheek hanging low!
No wrinkle; or deep-furrow'd frown on the brow!

Vix furtum est illud, dicive injuria debet,
Quod cerâ, et multo melle rependit apis.

---

*DENNERI ANUS.**

DOCTUM anus artificem juste celebrata fatetur,
Denneri pinxit quam studiosa manus

* Diu publico fuit spectaculo egregia hæc tabula in area Palatina exteriori, juxta fanum Westmonasteriense.

Her forehead indeed is here circled around
With locks, like the ribbon, with which they are bound;
While glossy, and smooth, and as soft as the skin
Of a delicate peach, is the down of her chin;
But nothing unpleasant, or sad, or severe,
Or that indicates life in its winter—is here!
Yet all is express'd, with fidelity due,
Nor a pimple, or freckle, conceal'd from the view.

Many fond of new sights, or who cherish a taste,
For the labours of art, to this spectacle haste;
The youths all agree, that could old age inspire
The passion of love, hers would kindle the fire,

Nec stupor est oculis, fronti nec ruga severa,
Flaccida nec sulcis pendet utrinque gena.
Nil habet illepidum, morosum, aut triste tabella;
Argentum capitis præter, anile nihil.
Apparent nivei vittæ sub margine cani,
Fila colorati qualia Seres habent.
Lanugo mentum, sed quæ tenuissima, vestit,
Mollisque, et qualis Persica mala tegit.
Nulla vel e minimis fugiunt spiracula visum;
At neque lineolis de cutis ulla latet.
Spectatum veniunt, novitas quos allicit usquam,
Quosque vel ingenii fama, vel artis amor.

And the matrons with pleasure confess, that they see
Ridiculous nothing or hideous in thee.
The nymphs for themselves scarcely hope a decline,
Oh wonderful woman! as placid as thine!

Strange magic of art! which the youth can engage
To peruse, half-enamour'd, the features of age;
And force from the virgin a sigh of despair,
That she, when as old, shall be equally fair!
How great is the glory, that Denner has gain'd,
Since Apelles not more for his Venus obtain'd!

Adveniunt juvenes; et anus si possit amari,
Dennere, agnoscunt hoc meruisse tuam.
Adveniunt hilares nymphæ; similemque senectam
Tam pulchram et placidam dent sibi fata, rogant.
Matronæ adveniunt, vetulæque fatentur in ore
Quod nihil horrendum, ridiculumve vident.
Quantus honos arti, per quam placet ipsa senectus;
Quæ facit, ut nymphis invideatur anus!
Pictori cedit quæ gloria, cum nec Apelli
Majorem famam det Cytherea suo!

THE TEARS OF A PAINTER.

APELLES, hearing that his boy
Had just expir'd, his only joy,
Altho' the sight with anguish tore him,
Bade place his dear remains before him.
He seiz'd his brush, his colours spread;
And—" Oh! my child, accept"—he said,
" ('Tis all that I can now bestow,)
" This tribute of a father's woe!"
Then, faithful to the two-fold part,
Both of his feelings and his art,
He clos'd his eyes, with tender care,
And form'd at once a fellow pair.
His brow, with amber locks beset,
And lips he drew, not livid yet;

LACRYMÆ PICTORIS.

INFANTEM audivit puerum, sua gaudia, Apelles
Intempestivo fato obiisse diem.
Ille, licet tristi perculsus imagine mortis,
Proferri in medium corpus inane jubet,

And shaded all, that he had done,
To a just image of his son.

Thus far is well. But view again,
The cause of thy paternal pain!
Thy melancholy task fulfil!
It needs the last, last touches still.
Again his pencil's power he tries,
For on his lips a smile he spies:
And still his cheek unfaded shows,
The deepest damask of the rose.

Et calamum, et succos poscens, "Hos accipe luctus,
"Mærorem hunc," dixit, "nate, parentis habe!"
Dixit; et, ut clausit, clausos depinxit ocellos;
Officio pariter fidus utrique pater:
Frontemque et crines, nec adhuc pallentia formans
Oscula, adumbravit lugubre pictor opus.
Perge parens, mærendo tuos expendere luctus;
Nondum opus absolvit triste suprema manus.
Vidit adhuc molles genitor super oscula risus;
Vidit adhuc veneres irrubuisse genis,
Et teneras raptim veneres. hlandosque lepores,
Et tacitos risus transtulit in tabulam.

Then, heedful to the finish'd whole,
With fondest eagerness he stole,
'Till scarce himself distinctly knew,
The cherub copy'd from the true.

Now, painter, cease! Thy task is done.
Long lives this image of thy son;
Nor short-liv'd shall the glory prove,
Or of thy labour, or thy love.

THE MAZE.

FROM right to left, and to and fro,
Caught in a labyrinth, you go,

Pingendo desiste tuum signare dolorem;
Filioli longum vivet imago tui;
Vivet et æternâ vives tu laude, nec arte
Vincendus pictor, nec pietate pater.

SPE FINIS.

AD dextram, ad lœvam, porro, retro, ítque reditque,
Deprensum in laqueo quem labyrinthus habet,

And turn, and turn, and turn again,
To solve the myst'ry, but in vain
Stand still, and breathe, and take from me
A clue, that soon shall set you free !
Not Ariadne, if you met her,
Herself could serve you with a better.
You enter'd easily——find where——
And make, with ease, your exit there !

NO SORROW PECULIAR TO THE SUFFERER.

THE lover, in melodious verses,
His singular distress rehearses,

Et legit et relegit gressus, sese explicet unde,
Perplexum quærens unde revolvat iter.
Sta modò, respira paulum, simul accipe filum ;
Certius et melius non Ariadne dabit,
Sic te, sic solum, expedies errore ; viarum
Principium invenias, id tibi finis erit.

Nemo miser nisi comparatus.

"QUIS fuit infelix adeó ! quis perditus æque !"
Conqueritur mæsto carmine tristis amans.

Still closing with a rueful cry,
" Was ever such a wretch as I ?"
Yes! Thousands have endur'd before
All thy distress; some haply more.
Unnumber'd Corydons complain,
And Strephons, of the like disdain;
And if thy Chloe be of steel;
Too deaf to hear, too hard to feel!
Not her alone that censure fits,
Nor thou alone hast lost thy wits.

Non novus hic questus, rarove auditus; amantes
Deserti et spreti mille queruntur idem.
Fatum decantas quod tu miserabile, multus
Deplorat multo cum Corydone, Strephon.
Si tua cum reliquis confertur amica puellis,
Non ea vel sola est ferrea, tuve miser.

THE SNAIL.

To grass, or leaf, or fruit, or wall,
The Snail sticks close, nor fears to fall,
As if he grew there, house and all
together.

Within that house secure he hides,
When danger imminent betides
Of storm, or other harm besides
of weather.

Give but his horns the slightest touch,
His self-collecting power is such,
He shrinks into his house, with much
displeasure!

LIMAX,

FRONDIBUS et pomis, herbisque tenaciter hæret
Limax, et secum portat ubique domum,
Tutus in hac sese occultat, si quando periclum
Imminet, aut subitæ decidit imber aquæ.
Cornua vel leviter tangas, se protinus in se
Colligit, in proprios contrahiturque lares.

Where'er he dwells, he dwells alone,
Except himself has chattels none,
Well-satisfied to be his own
whole treasure.

Thus, hermit-like, his life he leads,
Nor partner of his banquet needs,
And if he meets one, only feeds
the faster.

Who seeks him must be worse than blind,
(He and his house are so combin'd)
If, finding it, he fails to find
its master.

Secum habitat quacunque habitat; sibi tota suppellex;
Solæ quas adamat, quasque requirit opes.
Secum potat, edit, dormit; sibi in ædibus iisdem
Conviva et comes est, hospes et hospitium.
Limacem, quacumque siet, quacumque moretur,
Siquis eum quærat dixeris esse domi.

THE CANTAB.

WITH two spurs or one; and no great matter which;
Bbots bought, or boots borrow'd, a whip or a switch,
Five shillings or less for the hire of his beast,
Part paid into hand;—you must wait for the rest.
Thus equipt, Academicus climbs up his horse,
And out they both sally, for better or worse;
His heart void of fear, and as light as a feather;
And in violent haste to go not knowing whither:
Thro' the fields and the towns, (see!) he scampers along;
And is look'd at, and laugh'd at, by old and by young;

EQUES ACADEMICUS.

CALCARI instruitur juvenis; geminove vel uno,
Haud multum, aut ocreis cujus, et unde, refert;
Fors fortasse suo, fortasse aliunde, flagello;
Quantulacunque sui, pars tamen ipse sui.
Sic rite armatus, quinis (et forte minoris)
Conductum solidis scandere gestit equum.
Lœtus et impavidus qua fert fortuna (volantem
Cernite) quadrupedem pungit et urget iter:
Admisso cursu, per rura, per oppida fertur:
Adlatrant catuli, multaque ridet anus.

Till at length overspent, and his sides smear'd with blood
Down tumbles his horse, man and all in the mud.
In a waggon or chaise, shall he finish his route?
Oh! scandalous fate! he must do it on foot!

Young gentlemen, hear!—I am older than you;
The advice, that I give, I have prov'd to be true.
Wherever your journey may be, never doubt it,
The faster you ride, you're the longer about it.

Jamque ferox plagis, erectâ ad verbera dextrâ,
Calce cruentatâ lassat utrumque latus.
Impete sed tanto vixdum confecerit ille
Milliâ propositæ sexve novemve viæ,
Viribus absumptis fessusque labore, caballus
Sternit in immundum seque equitemque lutum.
Vectus iter peraget curru plaustrove viator?
Proh pudor et facinus! cogitur ire pedes.
Si, nec inexpertum, seniorem junior audis,
Quæ sint exiguæ commoda disce moræ.
Quam tibi præcipio, brevis est, sed regula certa;
Ocyus ut possis pergere, lentus eas!

EPIGRAMS

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

OF OWEN.

On one Ignorant and Arrogant.

THOU may'st of double ignorance boast,
Who know'st not, that thou nothing know'st.

In ignorantem arrogantem
Linum.

Captivum, Line, te tenet ignorantia duplex.
Scis nihil, et nescis te quoque scire nihil.

Prudent Simplicity.

THAT thou may'st injure no man, dove-like be,
And serpent-like, that none may injure thee!

Prudens Simplicitas.

Ut nulli nocuisse velis, imitare columbam:
Serpentem, ut possit nemo nocere tibi.

To a Friend in Distress.

I Wish thy lot, now bad, still worse, my friend,
For when at worst, they say, things always mend!

Ad Amicum Panperem,

Est male nunc? Utinam in pejus sors omnia vertat,
Succedunt summis optima sæpe malis.

WHEN little more than boy in age,
I deem'd myself almost a sage;
But now seem worthier to be styl'd,
For ignorance almost a child.

Omnia me dum junior essem, scire putabam,
Quo scio plus, hoc me nunc scio scire minus.

Retaliation.

THE works of antient bards divine,
Aulus, thou scorn'st to read;
Aud should posterity read thine,
It would be strange indeed!

Lex Talionis.

Majorum nunquam, Aule, legis monumenta tuorum:
Mirum est, posteritas si tua scripta legat.

Sun-set and Sun-rise.

CONTEMPLATE, when the sun declines,
Thy death, with deep reflection!
And when again he rising shincs,
Thy day of resurrection!

De Ortu et Occasu.

Sole oriente, tui reditûs a morte memento!
Sis memor occasûs, sole cadente, tui!

APPENDIX.

No. 5.

MONTES GLACIALES,

IN OCEANO

GERMANICO NATANTES.

En, quæ prodigia, ex oris allata remotis,
Oras adveniunt pavefacta per æquora nostras!
Non equidem priscæ sæclum rediisse videtur
Pyrrhæ, cum Proteus pecus altos visere montes
Et sylvas, egit. Sed tempora vix leviora
Adsunt, evulsi quando radicitùs, alti
In mare descendunt montes, fluctusque pererrant.
Quid veró hoc monstri est magis et mirabile visu?
Splendentes video, ceu pulchro ex ære vel auro
Conflatos, rutilisque accinctos undique gemmis,
Baccâ cæruleâ, et flammas imitante pyropo.
Ex oriente adsunt, ubi gazas optima tellus
Parturit omnigenas, quibus æva per omnia sumptu
Ingenti finxere sibi diademata reges?

Vix hoc crediderim. Non fallunt talia acutos
Mercatorum oculos: prius et quàm littora Gangis
Liquissent, avidis gratissima præda fuissent.
Ortos unde putemus? An illos Vesvius atrox
Protulit, ignivomisve ejecit faucibus Ætna?
Luce micant propriâ, Phæbive, per aëra purum
Nunc stimulantis equos, argentea tela retorquent?
Phæbi luce micant. Ventis et fluctibus altis
Appulsi, et rapidis subter currentibus undis,
Tandem non fallunt oculos. Capita alta vIdere est
Multâ onerata nive, et canis conspersa pruinis.
Cætera sunt glacies. Procul hinc, ubi Bruma ferè omnes
Constristat menses, portenta hæc horrida nobis
Illa strui voluit. Quoties de culmine summo
Clivorum fluerent in littora prona, solutæ
Sole, nives, propero tendentes in mare cursu,
Illa gelu fixit. Paulatim attollere sese
Mirum cæpit opus; glacieque ab origine rerum
In glaciem aggestâ, sublimes vertice tandem
Æquavit montes non crescere nescia moles.
Sic immensa diu stetit, æternumque stetisset
Congeries, hominum neque vi neque mobilis arte,
Littora ni tandem declivia deseruisset,
Pondere victa suo. Dilabitur. Omnia circum

Antra et saxa gemunt, subito concussa fragore,
Dum ruit in pelagum, tanquam studiosa natandi,
Ingens tota strues. Sic Delos dicitur olim,
Insula, in Ægæo fluitâsse erratica ponto.
Sed non ex glacie Delos; neque torpida Delum
Bruma inter rupes genuit nudum sterilemque.
Sed vestita herbis erat illa, ornataque nunquam
Deciduâ lauro; et Delum dilexit Apollo.
At vos, errrones horrendi, et caligine digni
Cimmeriâ, Deus idem odit. Natalia vestra,
Nubibus involvens frontem, non ille tueri
Sustinuit. Patrium vos ergo requirite cælum!
Ite! Redite! Timete moras; ni lenitèr austro
Spirante, et nitidas Phœbo jaculante sagittas
Hostili vobis, pereatis gurgite misti!

ON

THE ICE ISLANDS.

SEEN FLOATING

IN THE GERMAN OCEAN.

WHAT portents, from what distant region, ride,
Unseen till now in ours, th' astonish'd tide ?
In ages past, old Proteus, with his droves
Of sea-calves, sought the mountains and the groves.
But now, descending whence of late they stood,
Themselves the mountains, seem to rove the flood.
Dire times were they, full-charg'd with human woes,
And these, scarce less calamitous than those.
What view we now ? More wond'rous still ! Behold !
Like burnish'd brass they shine, or beaten gold ;
And all around the pearl's pure splendour show,
And all around the ruby's fiery glow.
Come they from India, where the burning earth,
All-bounteous, gives her richest treasures birth ;
And where the costly gems that beam around
The brows of mightiest potentates are found?
No. Never such a countless dazzling store
Had left, unseen, the Ganges' peopled shore.

Rapacious hands, and ever-watchful eyes,
Should sooner far have mark'd, and seiz'd the prize.
Whence sprang they then? Ejected have they come
From Ves'vius', or from Ætna's burning womb?
Thus shine they self-illum'd, or but display
The borrow'd splendours of a cloudless day?
With borrow'd beams they shine. The gales, that breathe
Now land-ward, and the current's force beneath,
Have borne them nearer: and the nearer sight,
Advantag'd more, contemplates them aright.
Their lofty summits, crested high, they show,
With mingled sleet, and long-incumbent snow.
The rest is ice. Far hence, where, most severe,
Bleak winter well-nigh saddehs all the year,
Their infant growth began. He bade arise
Their uncouth forms, portentous in our eyes.
Oft as dissolv'd by transient suns, the snow
Left the tall cliff, to join the flood below;
He caught, and curdled, with a freezing blast
The current, ere it reach'd the boundless waste.
By slow degrees, uprose the wond'rous pile,
And long successive ages roll'd the while;
Till, ceaseless in its growth, it claim'd to stand,
Tall as its rival mountains on the land.

Thus stood, and, unremovable by skill,
Or force of man, had stood the structure still;
But that, tho' firmly fixt, supplanted yet
By pressure of its own enormous weight,
It left the shelving beach—and, with a sound,
That shook the bellowing waves and rocks around,
Self-launch'd, and swiftly, to the briny wave,
As if instinct with strong desire to lave,
Down went the pond'rous mass. So bards of old,
How Delos swam th' Ægean deep, have told.
But not of ice was Delos. Delos bore
Herb, fruit, and flow'r. She, crown'd with laurel, wore,
E'en under wint'ry skies, a summer smile;
And Delos was Apollo's fav'rite isle.
But, horrid wand'rers of the deep, to you
He deems Cimmerian darkness only due.
Your hated birth he deign'd not to survey,
But, scornful, turn'd his glorious eyes away.
Hence! Seek your home, nor longer rashly dare
The darts of Phœbus, and a softer air;
Lest ye regret, too late, your native coast,
In no congenial gulph for ever lost!

APPENDIX.

No. 6.

I make no apology for the introduction of the following lines, though I have never learned who wrote them. Their elegance will sufficiently recommend them to persons of classical taste and erudition: and I shall be happy, if the English version, that they have received from me, be found not to dishonour them. Affection for the memory of the worthy man, whom they celebrate, alone prompted me to this endeavour.

W. COWPER.

VERSES

TO THE MEMORY OF DR. LLOYD;

SPOKEN AT THE

WESTMINSTER ELECTION NEXT AFTER HIS DECEASE.

OUR good old friend is gone, gone to his rest,
Whose social converse was itself a feast.

O ye of riper years, who recollect,
How once ye lov'd, and ey'd him with respect,
Both in the firmness of his better day,
While yet he rul'd you with a father's sway,
And when, impair'd by time, and glad to rest,
Yet still with looks in mild complacence drest,
He took his annual seat, and mingled here
His sprightly vein with yours--now drop a tear!
In morals blameless, as in manners meek,
He knew no wish, that he might blush to speak,
But, happy in whatever state below,
And richer than the rich in being so,
Obtain'd the hearts of all, and such a meed
At length from one* as made him rich indeed.
Hence then, ye titles, hence, not wanted here!
Go! garnish merit in a higher sphere,
The brows of those, whose more exalted lot
He could congratulate, but envy'd not!
Light lie the turf, good Senior, on thy breast;
And tranquil, as thy mind was, be thy rest,

* He was usher and under-master of Westminster near fifty years, and retired from his occupation when he was near seventy, with a handsome pension from the king.

Tho', living, thou hadst more desert, than fame,
And not a stone now chronicles thy name !

ABIIT senex. Periit senex amabilis,
Quo non fuit jucundior.
Lugete vos, ætas quibus maturior
Senem colendum præstitit ;
Seu quando, viribus valentioribus
Firmoque fretus pectore,
Florentiori vos juventute excolens
Curâ fovebat patriâ,
Seu quando, fractus, jamque donatus rude,
Vultu sed usque blandulo,
Miscere gaudebat suas facetias
His annuis leporibus !
Vixit probus, purâque simplex indole,
Blandisque comis moribus,
Et dives æquâ mente, charus omnibus,
Unius auctus munere.
Ite, tituli ! Meritis beatioribus
Aptate laudes debitas !

Nec invidebat ille, si quibus favens
Fortuna plus arriserat.
Placide senex, levi quiescas cespite,
Etsi superbum nec vivo tibi
Decus sit inditum, nec mortuo
Lapis notatus nomine!

APPENDIX.

No. 7.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM THE FABLES OF GAY.

Lepus Multis Amicus.

LUSUS amicitia est, uni nisi dedita, ceu fit,
Simplice ni nexus fœdere, lusus amor.
Incerto genitore puer, non sæpe paternæ
Tutamen novit, deliciasque domûs:
Quique sibi fidos fore multos sperat, amicus,
Mirum est huic misero si ferat ullus opem.

Comis erat, mitisque, et nolle et velle paratus
Cum quovis, Gaii more modoque, Lepus.
Ille, quot in sylvis, et quot spatiantur in agris
Quadrupedes, nôrat conciliare sibi.

Et quisque ínnocuo, invitoque lacessere quenquam
Labra tenus saltem fidus amicus erat.
Ortum sub lucis dum pressa cubilia linquit,
Rorantes herbas, pabula sueta, petens,
Venatorum audit clangores poné sequentem,
Fulmineumque sonum territus erro fugit.
Corda pavor pulsat, sursum sedet, erigit aures,
Respicit, et sentit jam prope adesse necem.
Utque canes fallat, latè circumvagus, illuc,
Unde abiit, mirâ calliditate redit;
Viribus et fractis tandem se projicit ultrò
In mediâ miserum semianimemque viâ.
Vîx ibi stratus, equi sonitum pedis audit, et, oh spe
Quam lætâ adventu cor agitatur equi!
Dorsum (inquit) mihi, chare, tuum concede, tuoque
Auxilio nares fallere, vimque canum.
Me meus, ut nosti, pes prodit——fidus amicus
Fert quodcunque lubens, nec grave sentit, onus.
Belle miselle lepuscule, (equus respondet) amara
Omnia quæ tibi sunt, sunt et amara mihi.
Verum age—sume animos—multi, me pone, bonique
Adveniunt, quorum sis citò salvus ope.
Proximus armenti dominus bos solicitatus
Auxilium his verbis se dare posse negat.

Quando quadrupedum, quot vivunt, nullus amicum
Me nescire potest usque fuisse tibi,
Libertate æquus, quam cedit amicus amico,
Utar, et absque metu ne tibi displiceam;
Hinc me mandat amor. Juxta istum messis acervum
Me mea, præ cunctis chara, juvenca manet;
Et quis non ultro quæcumque negotia linquit,
Pareat ut dominæ, cum vocat ipsa, suæ?
Neu me crudelem dicas---discedo---sed hircus,
Cujus ope effugias integer, hircus adest,
Febrem (ait hircus) habes. Heu, sicca ut lumina languent
Utque caput, collo deficiente, jacet!
Hirsutum mihi tergum; et forsan læserit ægrum,
Vellere eris melius fultus, ovisque venit.
Me mihi fecit onus natura, ovis inquit anhelans
Sustineo lanæ pondera tanta meæ;
Me nec velocem nec fortem jacto, solentque
Nos etiam sævi dilacerare canes.
Ultimus accedit vitulus, vitulumque precatur
Ut periturum alias ocyus eripiat.
Remne ego respondet vitulus, suscepero tantam,
Non depulsus adhuc ubere, natus heri?
Te quem maturi canibus validique relinquunt
Incolumem potero reddere parvus ego?

Præterea tollens quem illi aversantur, amicis
Forte parum videar consuluisse meis.
Ignoscas oro. Fidissima dissociantur
Corda, et tale tibi sat liquet esse meum.
Ecce autem ad calces canis est! te quanta perempto
Tristitia est nobis ingruitura!——Vale!

AVARUS ET PLUTUS.

ICTA fenestra Euri flatu stridebat, avarus
Ex somno trepidus surgit, opumque memor.
Lata silenter humi ponit vestigia, quemque
Respicit ad sonitum respiciensque tremit;
Angustissima quæque foramina lampade visit,
Ad vectes, obices, fertque refertque manum.
Dein reserat crebris junctam compagibus arcam
Exultansque omnes conspicit intus opes.
Sed tandem furiis ultricibus actus ob artes
Queis sua res tenuis creverat in cumulum.
Contortis manibus nunc stat, nunc pectora pulsans
Aurum execratur, perniciemque vocat;
O mihi, ait misero mens quam tranquilla fuisset,
Hoc celasset adhuc si modo terra malum!

Nunc autem virtus ipsa est venalis; et aurum
Quid contra vitii tormina sæva valet?
O inimicum aurum! O homini infestissima pestis,
Cui datur illecebras vincere posse tuas?
Aurum homines suasit contemnere quicquid honestum est
Et præter nomen nil retinere boni.
Aurum cuncta mali per terras semina sparsit;
Aurum nocturnis furibus arma dedit.
Bella docet fortes, timidosque ad pessima ducit,
Fœdifragas artes, multiplicesque dolos,
Nec vitii quicquam est, quod non inveneris ortum
Ex malesuadâ auri sacrilegâque fame.
Dixit, et ingemuit; Plutusque suum sibi numen
Ante oculos, irâ fervidus, ipse stetit.
Arcam clausit avarus, et ora horrentia rugis
Ostendens, tremulum sic Deus increpuit.
Questibus his raucis mihi cur, stulte, obstrepis aures?
Ista tui similis tristia quisque cânit.
Commaculavi egone humanum genus, improbe? Culpa
Dum rapis, et captas omnia, culpa tua est.
Mene execrandum censes, quia tam pretiosa
Criminibus fiunt perniciosa tuis?
Virtutis specie, pulchro ceu pallio amictus
Quisque catus nebulo sordida facta tegit.

Atque suis manibus commissa potentia, durum
Et dirum subito vergit ad imperium.
Hinc, nimium dum latro aurum detrudit in arcam,
Idem aurum latet in pectore pestis edax.
Nutrit avaritiam et fastum, suspendere adunco
Suadet naso inopes, et vitium omne docet.
Auri et larga probo si copia contigit, instar
Roris dilapsi ex æthere cuncta beat:
Tum. quasi numen inesset, alit, fovet, educat orbos
Et viduas lacrymis ora rigare vetat.
Quo sua crimina jure auro derivet avarus
Aurum animæ pretium qui cupit atque capit?
Lege pari gladium incuset sicarius atrox
Cæso homine, et ferrum judicet esse reum.

PAPILIO ET LIMAX.

Qui subito ex imis rerum in fastigia surgit,
Nativas sordes, quicquid agatur olet.

In closing this series of Cowper's translations, I must not fail to express my concern, that I am unable to present to my reader, according to my intention, a specimen of the Henriade, as translated by the poetical brothers.

I had been informed, that I should find their production in a magazine for the year 1759:——I have indeed found in a magazine of that period a version of the poem, but not by the Cowpers; yet their version probably exists comprized in a periodical publication——but my own researches, and those of a few literary friends, kindly diligent in enquiry, have hitherto been unable to discover it.

APPENDIX.

No. 8.

During Cowper's visit to Eartham he kindly pointed out to me three of his papers in the last volume of the Connoisseur. I inscribed them with his name at the time, and imagine that the readers of his life may be gratified in seeing them inserted here. I find other numbers of that work ascribed to him, but the three following I print as his, on his own explicit authority. Number 119, Thursday May 6, 1756——Number 134, Thursday August 19——Number 138, Thursday September 16.

THE CONNOISSEUR.

(NUMBER 119.)

Plenus rimarum sum, huc et illuc perfluo.
TER.

Leaky at bottom; if those chinks you stop,
In vain—the secret will run o'er at top.

THERE is no mark of our confidence taken more kindly by a friend, than the entrusting him with a secret, nor any which he is so likely to abuse. Confidants in general are like crazy firelocks, which are no sooner charged and cocked, than the spring gives way, and the report immediately follows. Happy to

have been thought worthy the confidence of one friend, they are impatient to manifest their importance to another; 'till between them, and their friend, and their friend's friend, the whole matter is presently known *to all our friends round the Wrekin.* The secret catches as it were by contact, and like electrical matter breaks forth from every link in the chain, almost at the same instant. Thus the whole Exchange may be thrown into a buz to morrow, by what was whispered in the middle of Marlborough Downs this morning, and in a week's time the streets may ring with the intrigue of a woman of fashion, bellowed out from the foul mouths of the hawkers, though at present it is known to no creature living, but her gallant and her waiting maid.

As the talent of secrecy is of so great importance to society, and the necessary commerce between individuals cannot be securely carried on without it, that this deplorable weakness should be so general, is much to be lamented. You may as well pour water into a funnel or sieve, and expect it to be retained there, as commit any of your concerns to so slippery a companion. It is remarkable, that in these men who have thus lost the faculty of retention, the desire of being communicative is always most prevalent

where it is least justified. If they are entrusted with a matter of no great moment, affairs of more consequence will perhaps in a few hours shuffle it entirely out of their thoughts; but if any thing be delivered to them with an earnestness, a low voice, and the gesture of a man in terror for the consequence of its being known; if the door is bolted, and every precaution taken to prevent surprise, however they may promise secrecy, and however they may intend it, the weight upon their minds will be so extremely oppressive, that it will certainly put their tongues in motion.

This breach of trust, so universal amongst us, is, perhaps, in great measure owing to our education. The first lesson our little masters and misses are taught is to become blabs and tell-tales: they are bribed to divulge the petty intrigues of the family below stairs to papa and mamma in the parlour, and a doll or hobby-horse is generally the encouragement of a propensity, which could scarcely be atoned for by a whipping. As soon as children can lisp out the little intelligence they have picked up in the hall or the kitchen, they are admired for their wit; if the butler has been caught kissing the housekeeper in his pantry, or the footman detected in romping with the

chamber-maid, away flies little Tommy or Betsy with the news; the parents are lost in admiration of the pretty rogues understanding, and reward such uncommon ingenuity with a kiss or a sugar-plumb.

Nor does an inclination to secrecy meet with less encouragement at school. The governantes at the boarding school teach miss to be a good girl, and tell them every thing she knows: thus if any young lady is unfortunately discovered eating a green apple in a corner; if she is heard to pronounce a naughty word, or is caught picking the letters out of another miss's sampler, away runs the chit who is so happy as to get the start of the rest, screams out her information as she goes; and the prudent matron chucks her under the chin, and tells her that she is a good girl, and every body will love her.

The management of our young gentlemen is equally absurd; in most of our schools, if a lad is discovered in a scrape, the impeachment of an accomplice, as at the Old-Bailey, is made the condition of a pardon. I remember a boy, engaged in robbing an orchard, who was unfortunately taken prisoner in an apple-tree, and conducted, under the strong guard of the farmer and his dairy-maid to the master's house. Upon his absolute refusal to discover his associates,

the pedagogue undertook to lash him out of his fidelity; but finding it impossible to scourge the secret out of him, he at last gave him up for an obstinate villain, and sent him to his father, who told him he was ruined, and was going to disinherit him for not betraying his school-fellows.

I must own I am not fond of thus drubbing our youths into treachery; and am much pleased with the request of Ulysses, when he went to Troy, who begged of those who were to have the care of young Telemachus, that they would above all things teach him to be just, sincere, faithful, and to keep a secret.

Every man's experience must have furnished him with instances of confidants who are not to be relied on, and friends who are not to be trusted; but few perhaps have thought it a character so well worth their attention, as to have marked out the different degrees into which it may be divided, and the different methods by which secrets are communicated.

Ned Trusty is a tell-tale of a very singular kind. Having some sense of his duty he hesitates a little at the breach of it. If he engages never to utter a syllable, he most punctually performs his promise; but then he has the knack of insinuating by a nod, and a shrug well-timed, or a seasonable leer, as much as

others can convey in express terms. It is difficult in short to determine, whether he is more to be admired for his resolution in not mentioning, or his ingenuity in disclosing a secret. He is also excellent at a doubtful phrase, as Hamlet calls it, or ambiguous giving out, and his conversation consists chiefly of such broken inuendoes as —" well I know—or I could—and if I would—or, if I list to speak—or there be, and if there might, &c."

Here he generally stops; and leaves it to his hearers to draw proper inferences from these piecemeal premises. With due encouragement however he may be prevailed on to slip the padlock from his lips, and immediately overwhelms you with a torrent of secret history, which rushes forth with more violence for having been so long confined.

Poor Meanwell, though he never fails to transgress, is rather to be pitied than condemned. To trust him with a secret is to spoil his appetite, to break his rest, and to deprive him for a time of every earthly enjoyment. Like a man who travels with his whole fortune in his pocket, he is terrrified if you approach him, and immediately suspects that you come with a felonious intent to rob him of his charge. If he ventures abroad, it is to walk in some unfre-

quented place, where he is least in danger of an attack. At home he shuts himself up from his family, paces to and fro his chamber, and has no relief but from muttering over to himself, what he longs to publish to the world; and would gladly submit to the office of town-cryer, for the liberty of proclaiming it in the market-place. At length however weary of his burden, and resolved to bear it no longer, he consigns it to the custody of the first friend he meets, and returns to his wife with a chearful aspect, and wonderfully altered for the better.

Careless is perhaps equally undesigning, though not equally excusable. Intrust him with an affair of the utmost importance, on the concealment of which your fortune and happiness depend, he hears you with a kind of half attention, whistles a favourite air, and accompanies it with the drumming of his fingers upon the table. As soon as your narration is ended, or perhaps in the middle of it, he asks your opinion of his sword-knot—damns his taylor for having dressed him in a snuff-coloured coat instead of a pompadour, and leaves you in haste to attend an auction; where, as if he meant to dispose of his intelligence to the best bidder, he divulges it with a voice as loud as an auctioneer's; and when you tax him with having played

you false, he is heartily sorry for it, but never knew that it was to be a secret.

To these I might add the character of the open and unreserved, who thinks it a breach of friendship to conceal any thing from his intimates; and the impertinent, who having by dint of observation made himself master of your secret, imagines he may lawfully publish the knowledge it cost him so much labour to obtain, and considers that privilege as the reward due to his industry. But I shall leave these, with many other characters, which my reader's own experience may suggest to him, and conclude with prescribing, as a short remedy for this evil, that no man may betray the counsel of his friend, let every man keep his own.

THE CONNOISSEUR.

(NUMBER 134.)

Delicta majorum immeritus lues,
Romane, donec templa refeceris
Ædesque labentes Deorum, et
Fæda nigro simulacra fumo.
Hor.

The tottering tow'r and mould'ring walls repair,
And fill with decency the house of prayer;
Quick to the needy curate bring relief,
And deck the parish-church without a brief.

Mr. VILLAGE to Mr. TOWN.

DEAR COUSIN,

THE country at present, no less than the metropolis, abounding with politicians of every kind, I begin to despair of picking up any intelligence that might possibly be entertaining to your readers. However I have lately visited some of the most distant parts of the kingdom with a clergyman of my acquaintance: I shall not trouble you with an account of the im-

provements, that have been made in the seats, we saw, according to the modern taste, but proceed to give you some reflections which occurred to us in observing several country churches, and the behaviour of their congregations.

The ruinous condition of some of these edifices gave me great offence; and I could not help wishing that the honest vicar, instead of indulging his genius for improvements, by inclosing his gooseberry-bushes with a Chinese rail, and converting half an acre of his glebe-land into a bowling-green, would have applied part of his income to the more laudable purpose of sheltering his parishioners from the weather during their attendance on divine service. It is no uncommon thing to see the parsonage-house well thatched, and in exceeding good repair, while the church perhaps has scarce any other roof than the ivy that grows over it. The noise of owls, bats, and magpies, makes the principal part of the church-music in many of these antient edifices; and the walls, like a large map, seem to be portioned out into capes, seas, and promontories, by the various colours, by which the damps have stained them.——Sometimes the foundation being too weak to support the stee-

ple any longer, it has been found expedient to pull down that part of the building, and to hang the bells under a wooden shed on the ground beside it. This is the case in a parish in Norfolk, through which I lately passed, and where the clerk, and the sexton, like the two figures of St Dustan's, serve the bells in capacity of clappers, by striking them alternately with a hammer.

In other churches I have observed, that nothing unseemly or ruinous is to be found, except in the clergyman, and the appendages of his person. The 'squire of the parish, or his ancestors perhaps, to testify their devotion, and leave a lasting monument of their magnificence, have adorned the altar-piece with the richest crimson velvet, embroidered with vine-leaves and ears of wheat; and have dressed up the pulpit with the same splendour and expence; while the gentleman who fills it, is exalted in the midst of all this finery with a surplice as dirty as a farmer's frock, and a periwig that seems to have transferred its faculty of curling to the band, which appears in full buckle beneath it.

But if I was concerned to see several distressed pastors, as well as many of our country churches, in a tottering condition, I was more offended with the

indecency of worship in others. I could wish that the clergy would inform their congregations, that there is no occasion to scream themselves hoarse in making the responses; that the town-cryer is not the only person qualified to pray with true devotion; and that he who bawls the loudest, may nevertheless be the wickedest fellow in the parish. The old women too in the aisle might be told, that their time would be better employed in attending to the sermon, than in fumbling over their tattered testaments till they have found the text; by which time the discourse is near drawing to a conclusion: while a word or two of instruction might not be thrown away upon the younger part of the congregation, to teach them that making posies in summer-time, and cracking nuts in autumn, is no part of the religious ceremony.

The good old practice of psalm-singing is indeed, wonderfully improved in many country churches, since the days of Sternhold and Hopkins; and there is scarce a parish-clerk who has so little taste as not to pick his staves out of the new version. This has occasioned great complaints in some places, where the clerk has been forced to bawl by himself, because the rest of the congregation cannot find the psalm at

the end of their prayer-books; while others are highly disgusted at the innovation, and stick as obstinately to the old version as to the old stile.

The tunes themselves have also been new set to jiggish measures, and the sober drawl, which used to accompany the two first staves of the hundredth psalm, with the gloria patri, is now split into as many quavers as an Italian air. For this purpose there is in every country an itinerant band of vocal musicians, who make it their business to go round to all the churches in their turns, and after a prelude with the pitch-pipe, astonish the audience with hymns set to the new Winchester measure, and anthems of their own composing.

As these new-fashioned psalmodists are necessarily made up of young men and maids, we may naturally suppose that there is a perfect concord and symphony between them; and, indeed, I have known it happen, that these sweet singers have more than once been brought into disgrace by two close an unison between the thorough-bass and the treble.

It is a difficult matter to decide which is looked upon as the greatest man in a country church, the parson or his clerk. The latter is most certainly held in the higher veneration, where the former happens to be

only a poor curate, who rides post every sabbath from village to village, and mounts and dismounts at the church-door. The clerk's office is not only to tag the prayers with an amen, or usher in the sermon with a stave, but he is also the universal father to give away the brides, and the standing godfather to all the new-born bantlings. But in many places there is still a greater man belonging to the church then either the parson or the clerk himself. The person I mean is the 'squire; who, like the king, may be stiled the head of the church in his own parish. If the benefice be in his own gift, the vicar is his creature, and of consequence intirely at his devotion: or if the care of the church be left to a curate, the sunday fees roast-beef and plum-pudding, and the liberty to shoot in the manor, will bring him as much under the 'squire's command as his dogs and horses.

For this reason the bell is often kept tolling, and the people waiting in the church-yard an hour longer than the usual time; nor must the service begin till the 'squire has strutted up the aisle, and seated himself in the great pew in the chancel. The length of the sermon is also measured by the will of the squire, as formerly by the hour-glass, and I know one parish where the preacher has always the com-

plaisance to conclude his discourse, however abruptly, the minute that the 'squire gives the signal by rising up after his nap.

In a village church, the 'squire's lady, or the vicar's wife, are perhaps the only females that are stared at for their finery; but in the large cities and towns, where the newest fashions are brought down weekly by the stage-coach, or waggon, all the wives and daughters of the most topping tradesmen vie with each other every Sunday in the elegance of their apparel. I could even trace their gradations in their dress, according to the opulence, the extent, and the distance of the place from London. I was at church in a populous city in the North, where the mace-bearer cleared the way for Mrs. Mayoress, who came sidling after him in an enormous fan-hoop, of a pattern which had never been seen before in those parts. At another church in a corporation town, I saw several *Negligees*, with furbelowed aprons, which had long disputed the prize of superiority; but these were most woefully eclipsed by a burgess' daughter, just come from London, who appeared in a *Trollope* or *Slammerkin* with treble rfflues to the cuffs, pinked and gymped, and the sides of the petticoat drawn up in festoons. In some lesser borough towns, the contest I found lay between

three or four black and green bibs and aprons; at one a grocer's wife attracted our eyes by a new fashioned cap, called a *Joan*, and at another, they were wholly taken up by a mercer's daughter in a nun's hood.

I need not say any thing of the behaviour of the congregation in these more polite places of religious resort; as the same genteel ceremonies are practised there, as at the most fashionable churches in town. The ladies immediately on their entrance, breathe a pious ejaculation through their fan-sticks, and the beaux very gravely address themselves to the haberdashers' bills, glewed upon the lining of their hats. This pious duty is no sooner performed, than the exercise of bowing and certesying succeeds; the locking and unlocking of the pews drowns the reader's voice at the beginning of the service; and the rustling of silks, added to the whispering and tittering of so much good company, renders him totally unintelligible to the very end of it.

I am, dear Cousin, yours, &c.

THE CONNOISSEUR.

(NUMBER 138.)

Servatâ semper lege et ratione loquendi.

JUV.

Your talk to decency and reason suit,
Nor prate like fools, or gabble like a brute.

IN the comedy of the Frenchman in London, which we are told was acted at Paris with universal applause for several nights together, there is a character of a rough Englishman, who is represented as quite unskilled in the graces of conversation, and his dialogue consists almosts entirely of a repetition of the common salutation of—"How do you do?—How do you do?" Our nation has indeed been generally supposed to be of a sullen and uncommunicative disposition; while, on the other hand, the loquacious French have been allowed to possess the art of conversing beyond all other people. The Englishman requires to be wound up frequently, and stops very soon; but the Frenchman runs on in a continued alarum. Yet it must be acknowledged, that as the English consist of very different humours, their manner of discourse ad-

mits of great variety; but the whole French nation converse alike, and there is no difference in their address between a marquiss and a valet de chambre. We may frequently see a couple of French barbers accosting each other in the street, and paying their compliments with the same volubility of speech, the same grimace, and action, as two courtiers in the Thuilleries.

I shall not attempt to lay down any particular rules for conversation, but rather point out such faults in discourse and behaviour, as render the company of half mankind rather tedious than amusing. It is in vain indeed to look for conversation, where we might expect to find it in the greatest perfection, among persons of fashion; there it is almost annihilated by universal card-playing; insomuch that I have heard it given as a reason why it is impossible for our present writers to succeed in the dialogue of genteel comedy, that our people of quality scarce ever meet but to game. All their discourse turns upon the odd trick, and the four honours, and it is no less a maxim with the votaries of Whist, than with those of Bacchus, that talking spoils company.

Every one endeavours to make himself as agreeable to society as he can; but it often happens that

those, who most aim at shining in conversation, overshoot their mark. Though a man succeeds, he should not (as is frequently the case) engross the whole talk to himself; for that destroys the very essence of conversation, which is talking together. We should try to keep up conversation like a ball bandied to and fro from one to another, rather than seize it ourselves, and drive it before us like a foot-ball. We should likewise be cautious to adapt the matter of our discourse to our company, and not talk Greek before ladies, or of the last new furbelow to a meeting of country justices.

But nothing throws a more ridiculous air over our conversation than certain peculiarities, easily acquired, but very difficultly conquered and discarded. In order to display these absurdities in a truer light, it is my present purpose to enumerate such of them as are most commonly to be met with; and first to take notice of those buffoons in society, the attitudinarians and face-makers. These accompany every word with a peculiar grimace or gesture; they assent with a shrug, and contradict with a twisting of the neck; are angry with a wry mouth, and pleased in a caper or a minuet step. They may be considered as speaking harlequins, and their rules of eloquence are taken from the posture-master. These should be

condemned to converse only in dumb shew with their own person in the looking-glass; as well as the smirkers and smilers, who so prettily set off their faces, together with their words, by a je-ne-scai-quoi between a grin and a dimple. With these we may likewise rank the affected tribe of mimics, who are constantly taking off the peculiar tone of voice or gesture of their acquiantance; though they are such wretched imitators that (like bad painters) they are frequently forced to write the name under the picture before we can discover any likeness.

Next to these whose elocution is absorbed in action, and who converse chiefly with their arms and legs, we may consider the profest speakers. And first, the emphatical; who squeeze, and press, and ram down every syllable with excessive vehemence and energy. These orators are remarkable for their distinct elocution, and force of expression; they dwell on the important particles *of* and *the*, and the significant conjunctive *and*; which they seem to hawk up with much difficulty out of their own throats, and to cram them with no less pain into the ears of their auditors.

These should be suffered only to syringe, as it were, the ears of a deaf man, through an hearing-trumpet; though I must confess that I am equally offend-

ed with whisperers or low speakers, who seem to fancy all their acquaintance deaf, and come up so close to you, that they may be said to measure noses with you, and frequently overcome you with the exhalations of a powerful breath. I would have these oracular gentry obliged to talk at a distance through a speaking trumpet, or apply their lips to the walls of a whispering gallery. The wits, who will not condescend to utter any thing but a bon mot, and the whistlers, or tune-hummers, who never articulate at all, may be joined very agreeably together in concert; and to these tinkling cymbals I would also add the sounding brass—the bawler, who enquires after your health with the bellowing of a town-cryer.

The tatlers, whose pliable pipes are admirably adapted to the "soft parts of conversation," and sweetly "prattling out of fashion," make very pretty music from a beautiful face, and a female tongue; but from a rough manly voice. and coarse features, mere nonsence is as harsh and dissonant as a jig from an hurdy-gurdy. The swearers I have spoken of in a former paper; but the half-swearers, who split and mince, and fritter their oaths into *Gad's-but, ad's-fish,* and *demme;* the Gothic humbuggers, and those who "nick-name God's creatures," and call a man a cab-

bage, a crab, a queer-cub, an odd-fish, and an unaccountable *muskin,* should never come into company without an interpreter. But I will not tire my reader's patience by pointing out all the pests of conversation; nor dwell particularly on the sensibles, who pronounce dogmatically on the most trivial points, and speak in sentences;—the wonderers, who are always wondering what o'clock it is, or wondering whether it will rain or no, or wondering when the moon changes;—the phraseologists, who explain a thing by *all that,* or enter into particulars with *this, that,* and *t'other;* and lastly, the silent men, who seem afraid of opening their mouths, lest they should catch cold, and literally observe the precept of the Gospel, by letting their conversation be only yea, yea, and nay, nay.

The rational intercourse kept up by conversation, is one of our principal distinctions from brutes. We should therefore endeavour to turn this peculiar talent to our advantage, and consider the organs of speech as the instruments of understanding. We should be very careful not to use them as the weapons of vice, or tools of folly, and do our utmost to unlearn any trivial or ridiculous habits, which tend to lessen the value of such an inestimable prerogative.

It is indeed imagined by some philosophers, that even birds and beasts (though without the power of articulation) perfectly understand one another by the sounds they utter; and that dogs and cats, &c. have each a particular language to themselves, like different nations. Thus it may be supposed that the nightingales of Italy have as fine an ear for their own native wood-notes, as any signor or signora for an Italian air; that the boars of Westphalia gruntle as expressively through the nose, as the inhabitants in High-German; and that the frogs in the dykes of Holland croak as intelligibly as the natives jabber their Low-Dutch, However this may be, we may consider those whose tongues hardly seem to be under the influence of reason, and do not keep up the proper conversation of human creatures, as imitating the language of different animals: Thus, for instance, the affinity between chatterers and monkeys, and praters and parrots, is too obvious not to occur at once; grunters and growlers may be justly compared to hogs: snarlers are curs, and the *spitfire passionate* are a sort of wild cats that will not bear stroking, but will pur when they are pleased. Complainers are screech-owls; and story-tellers always repeating the same dull note, are cuckows. Poets that prick up their ears

at their own hideous braying, are no better than asses; critics in general are venomous serpents, that delight in hissing, and some of them who have got by heart a few technical terms, without knowing their meaning, are no other than magpies. I myself, who have crowed to the whole town for near three years past, may perhaps put my readers in mind of a dunghill cock; but as I must acquaint them that they will hear the last of me on this day fortnight, I hope they will then consider me as a swan, who is supposed to sing sweetly in his dying moments.

MOTTO ON A CLOCK,

WITH

A TRANSLATION BY THE EDITOR.

QUÆ lenta accedit, quam velox præterit hora!
Ut capias, patiens esto, sed esto vigil!

Slow comes the hour: its passing speed how great!
Waiting to seize it——vigilantly wait!

CONCLUSION.

Astanti sat erit si dicam sim tibi curæ:

* * * * * * * *

Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus
Nectens aut Paphiâ myrti, aut Parnaside lauri
Fronde comas, at ego securâ pace quiescam.

MILTONI MANSUS.

I shall but need to say be yet my friend:
He too perhaps shall bid the marble breathe
To honour me, and with the graceful wreathe
Or of Parnassus, or the Paphian Isle
Shall bind my brows——But I shall rest the while.

COWPER'S TRANSLATION.

THOUGH it seems unnecessary to enumerate the many public compliments, that have been paid by a variety of writers to the poetical excellence of Cowper, I must not fail to notice a private tribute to his merit, transmitted to me by the kindness of a distant friend.

In the form of a letter to an accomplished author of Ireland, it comprises a series of extensive observations on the poetry of my departed friend; observations so full of taste and feeling, that I hope the judicious writer will, in a season of leisure, revise, extend, and convert them into a separate monument to the memory of the poet, whom he is worthy to praise.

Being favoured with the liberty of using, in this publication, the manuscript I have mentioned, I selected from it a passage relating both to Milton and to Cowper, as an introduction to a proposal in honour of the two illustrious and congenial poets,

with which I promised to close this address to the public.

After many forcible remarks on the moral spirit of poetry, and a quotation from Lowth on its end and efficacy, the animated critic proceeds in the following words.

" The noblest benefits and delights of poetry can be but rarely produced, because all the requisites for producing them so very seldom meet. A vivid mind, and happy imitative power, may enable a poet to form glowing pictures of virtue, and almost produce in himself a short-lived enthusiasm of goodness. But although even these transient and factitious movements of mind may serve to produce grand and delightful effusions of poetry, yet when the best of these are compared with the poetic productions of a genuine lover of virtue, a discerning judgment will scarcely fail to mark the difference. A simplicity of conception and expression; a conscious and therefore unaffected dignity; an instinctive adherence to sober reason, even amid the highest flights; an uniform justness, and consistency of thought; a glowing, yet temperate ardour of feeling; a peculiar felicity, both in the choice and combination of terms, by

which even the plainest words acquire the truest character of eloquence, and which is rarely to be found, except where a subject is not intimately known, but cordially loved; these I conceive are the features peculiar to the real votary of virtue, and which must of course give to his strains a perfection of effect never to be attained by the poet of inferior moral endowments.

I believe it will be readily granted, that all these qualities were never more perfectly combined than in the poetry of *Milton*. And I think too there will be little doubt, that the next to him, in every one of these instances, beyond all comparison, is *Cowper*. The genius of the latter did certainly not lead him to emulate the songs of the Seraphim. But though he pursues a lower walk of poetry than his great master, he appears no less the enraptured votary of pure unmixed goodness. Nay perhaps he may in this one respect possess some peculiar excellences, which may make him seem more the bard of Christianity. That divine religion infinitely exalts, but it also deeply humbles the mind it inspires It gives majesty to the thoughts, but it impresses meekness on the manners, and diffuses tenderness through

the feelings. It combines sensibility with fortitude—the lowliness of the child, with the magnanimity of the hero.

The grandest features of the Christian character were never more gloriously exemplified than in that spirit, which animates the whole of Milton's poetry. His own *Michael* does not impress us with the idea of a purer, or more awful virtue than that, which we feel in every portion of his majestic verse; and he no less happily indicates the source, from which his excellence was derived, by the bright beams, which he ever and anon reflects upon us from the sacred Scriptures. But the milder graces of the Gospel are certainly less apparent. What we behold is so awful it might almost have inspired a wish, that a spirit equally pure and heavenly, might be raised to illustrate, with like felicity, the more attractive and gentler influences of our divine religion.

In Cowper, above any poet that ever lived, would such a wish seem to be fulfilled. In his charming effusions, we have the same spotless purity, the same elevated devotion, the same vital exercise of every noble and exalted quality of the mind, the same devotedness to the sacred Scriptures, and to the

peculiar doctrines of the gospel. The difference is, that instead of an almost reprehensive dignity, we have the sweetest familiarity—instead of the majestic grandeur of the Old Testament, we have the winning graces of the New——instead of those thunders, by which angels were discomfited, we have, as it were, " the still small voice," of him, who was meek and lowly of heart.

May we not then venture to assert, that from that spirit of devoted piety, which has rendered both these great men liable to the charge of religious enthusiasm, but which in truth raised the minds of both to a kind of happy residence

> " In regions mild, of calm, and serene air,
> " Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
> " Which men call earth,"

a peculiar character has been derived to the poetry of them both, which distinguishes their compositions from those of almost all the world besides? I have already enumerated some of the superior advantages of a truly virtuous poet, and presumed to state, that these are realized, in an unexampled degree, in Milton and Cowper. That they both owed this moral

eminence to their *vivid sense of religion* will, I conceive, need no demonstration, except what will arise to every reader of taste and feeling on examining their works. It will here, I think, be seen at once, that that sublimity of conception, that delicacy of virtuous feeling, that majestic independence of mind, that quick relish for all the beauties of nature, at once so pure, and so exquisite, which we find ever occuring in them both, could not have existed in the same unrivalled degree, if their devotion had been less intense, and of course their minds more dissipated amongst low and distracting objects."

The eloquent remarks, on the congeniality of mind, between Milton and Cowper will form, I trust, a favourable introduction to a proposal, by which the two congenial poets, may be united as contributors to a project of beneficence. A proposal in which it is my earnest desire to interest my readers, and which I take the most obvious mode of explaining to them, by inserting at the close of this work, the following.

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the persons who have honoured the intention of raising

A Public Monument to Cowper,

BY

ENTERING THEIR NAMES ON THE LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS.

Gratitude and integrity seem to require from me, at this time, an address to the favourers of a plan, which I proposed to the public, as a tribute due to a departed object of national esteem and affection. To publish a Milton in three 4to volumes (including all the Manuscripts of Cowper relating to Milton) at the price of six guineas, was a proposal, that, with extensive encouragement, might have gratified the wishes of Cowper's ardent admirers, and, in rendering a signal and just honour to him, might also have honoured the taste of an enlightened and a liberal nation.

Though the signature of several most respectable names seemed to afford an honourable sanction to my first idea of a public Monument for my literary friend, yet I am now disposed to relinquish that idea;——and I zealously solicit, not only those who have befriended it, but the public at large, to co-operate with me in a new, and different,

mark of regard to the memory of the poet, on a plan, which I hasten to explain, and to recommend to their favour

Since the publication of my first proposal, a favourite Godson and Namesake of Cowper has had the misfortune to become an Orphan at an early age. It has occurred to me, that I may improve the tribute of general respect to the memory of the poet, by converting his manuscripts relating to Milton, not into a marble monument, but into a little fund, to assist the education and future establishment of this interesting Orphan. I am confident, that no tribute of respect to Cowper's memory could be more truly acceptable to his pure and beneficent spirit, than what I now propose; and I feel a pleasure in believing, that I may gratify many of his admirers by affording them an opportunity of purchasing the posthumous poetry of my friend, and of indulging, at the same time, their feelings of tenderness and benevolence towards an Orphan particularly endeared to the departed poet.

It is therefore my present intention to print, not a Milton in three volumes, but the Latin and Italian poems of Milton translated by Cowper (with all that remains of his projected Dissertations on Paradise Lost) in one handsome quarto, at the price of two guineas.

I cherish a sanguine hope, that the liberality of the public, and a general wish to testify affectionate respect to Cowper's memory, in a manner, that will appear, I trust, peculiarly suited to the tenderness, and the beneficence of his character, may render such a subscription, as I have now proposed, in some degree adequate to the desirable object in view.

To those, who have honoured me with their names for higher sums on my former plan, it is my duty to say, that the persons, who have paid their money to the respective booksellers mentioned in the first proposal, are at liberty to resume the whole, or what portion of it they think proper.

If, on the contrary, they generously devote the whole sum (subscribed towards a monument for Cowper) to the orphan Godchild of the poet, I think it right to assure them, that whatever may be raised by the present application to their liberality, will be vested in two trustees, SAMUEL SMITH, and JOHN SARGENT, esquires, members of parliament, for the benefit of the Orphan whom I have mentioned.

In proportion as the admirers of Cowper enable me to accomplish a purpose, which I consider as the purest mode of showing regard to his memory, they will deserve, and (I trust) obtain future gratitude from the young object of their regard, and the sincerest thanks of their

Obliged and very faithful Servant,
W. HAYLEY.

*Felpham, near Chichester.
January 4, 1806.

Cowper's translations from the Latin and Italian poems of Milton are already transcribed for the press from the copy that includes his latest corrections.

All persons inclined to befriend the publication here recommended to their favour, for the benefit of the poet's orphan

Godchild, are respectfully requested to pay their intended contributions to Mr. JOHNSON, Saint Paul's Church-Yard, or to Mr. EVANS, Pall-Mall.

Those, whose names are marked by an Asterisk in the following List have made their respective payments, which as they made them in consequence of a different proposal, they are now gratefully desired either to reeal, or to confirm at their own pleasure.

LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS

To a proposal for raising a national Monument to Cowper, by a publication of his Milton, in three volumes, at six guineas.

	£.	s.
Rt. Hon. H. Addington,	10	10
R. H. Bennet, Esqr.	6	6
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YARDLEY-OAK.

STABAT IN HIS INGENS ANNOSO ROBORE QUERCUS;
UNA NEMUS.

Ovid Metamorph: Lib. 8.

TO

WILLIAM AITON,

OF KEW, ESQR. F. L. S.

THE FOLLOWING

EXQUISITE FRAGMENT

OF A

POEM,

ON A VEGETABLE SUBJECT,

IS INSCRIBED,

AS A MARK OF AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE,

BY HIS SINCERE FRIEND

THE EDITOR.

PREFACE

TO THE

POEM ON YARDLEY-OAK.

As many readers may be curious to learn some local particulars relating to an English Oak,* that can never cease to attract admiration in the poetry of Cowper, I endeavour to gratify their curiosity, by imparting to them the intelligence I have received from my friend, Dr. Johnson, the kinsman of the poet. I transcribe for this purpose the following passage from one of his Letters.

January 6, 1804.

Among our dear Cowper's papers, I found the following memorandum——

YARDLEY OAK IN GIRTH,
Feet 22, *Inches* $6\frac{1}{2}$

THE OAK AT YARDLEY LODGE,
Feet 28, *Inches* 5

As to Yardley Oak, it stands in Yardley Chase, where the Earls of Northampton have a fine seat. It was a favourite walk of our dear Cowper, and he once carried me to see that Oak. I believe it is five miles at least from Weston-Lodge. It is indeed a noble tree, perfectly sound, and stands in an open part of the Chase, with only one or two others near it, so as to be seen to advantage.

With respect to the Oak at Yardley Lodge, that is quite in decay—a pollard, and almost hollow. I took an excrescence from it in the year 1791, *and if I mistake not, Cowper told me it is said to have been an Oak in the time of the Conqueror.* This latter Oak is in the road to the former, but not above half so far from Weston Lodge, being only just beyond Killick and Dingledeny. This is all I can tell you about the Oaks. They were old acquaintance, and great favourites of the bard. How rejoiced I am to hear that he has immorta-*

* Cowper has mentioned this circumstance in writing to Mr. Rose, (Letter of Sept. 11, 1788.) He says the tree has been known by the name of Judith for many ages. Perhaps it received that name on being planted by the Countess Judith, niece to the Conqueror, whom he gave in marriage to the English Earl Waltheof, with the counties of Northampton and Huntingdon as her dower.

lized one of them in blank-verse! Where could those
161 *lines lie hid? Till this very day I never heard of their existence, nor suspected it.*"

It is indeed surprising, that Cowper never mentioned to any one of his most intimate friends the commencement of a poem on a subject that delighted him so much. It must have been written in the year 1791; and, as other poetical pursuits, particularly his translations from Milton, engrossed his attention in the course of that year, I apprehend he threw this admirable fragment aside, and absolutely forgot it.

It had been however, and very deservedly, a favourite of his fancy: for I never saw any of his compositions more carefully, or more judiciously corrected. The copy, that I had the delight of discovering, is written on a loose half-quire of large quarto paper, with so many blotted lines, and so many blank leaves, that his kinsman, in the hurry of looking over many old discarded paper-books, and loose sheets, might easily pass it as waste paper. I had examined a cargo of such books and papers, and was lamenting, that they contained only his rejected variations of translated

poetry, when this bright original first excited my wonder and delight. I could hardly have been more surprised, if a noble oak, in its natural majesty, had started up from the turf of my garden with full foliage before me. Surprize may have a great tendency to enhance the pleasure we derive from whatever is beautiful or sublime: but I am much deceived indeed by my partiality to the poet, if the following fragment fails to gain new applause from the lovers of poetry, on every fresh perusal.—It is to my feelings one of the richest and most highly-finished pieces of versification, that ever did honour to the fertile genius of my departed friend.

With these sentiments of its poetical merit, I enjoy an inexpressible gratification in being enabled to present it to the public, as the close of this extensive compilation, in which I have endeavoured, with affectionate zeal, to fix on the heart of our country such a complete impression of Cowper's various excellencies, as they made on my own.

YARDLEY-OAK.

SURVIVOR sole, and hardly such, of all,
That once liv'd here, thy brethren, at my birth,
Since which I number three-score winters past,
A shatter'd vet'ran, hollow-trunk'd perhaps,
As now, and with excoriate forks deform,
Relicts of ages, could a mind, imbu'd
With truth from Heav'n, created thing adore,
I might with rev'rence kneel, and worship thee!

It seems idolatry with some excuse,
When our fore-father Druids in their oaks
Imagin'd sanctity. The conscience, yet
Unpurify'd by an authentic act
Of amnesty, the meed of blood divine,
Lov'd not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom
Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste
Of fruit proscrib'd, as to a refuge, fled.

Thou wast a bauble once, a cup and ball,
Which babes might play with; and the thievish jay,
Seeking her food, with ease might have purloin'd
The auburn nut, that held thee, swallow'ing down
Thy yet close-folded latitude of boughs
And all thine embryo vastness at a gulp.
But Fate thy growth decreed; autumnal rains
Beneath thy parent tree mellow'd the soil
Design'd thy cradle; and a skipping deer,
With pointed hoof dibbling the glebe, prepar'd
The soft receptacle, in which, secure,
Thy rudiments should sleep the winter through.

So Fancy dreams. Disprove it, if ye can,
Ye reas'ners broad awake, whose busy search
Of argument, employ'd too oft amiss,
Sifts half the pleasures of short life away!

Thou fell'st mature, and, in the loamy clod
Swelling with vegetative force instinct,
Didst burst thine egg, as theirs the fabled Twins,
Now stars. Two lobes, protruding, pair'd exact;
A leaf succeeded, and another leaf,
And, all the elements thy puny growth
Fost'ring propitious, thou becam'st a twig.

Who liv'd, when thou wast such? Oh, couldst thou speak,
As in Dodona once thy kindred trees
Oracular, I would not curious ask
The future, best unknown, but at thy mouth
Inquisitive, the less ambiguous past!

By thee I might correct, erroneous oft,
The clock of history, facts and events
Timing more punctual, unrecorded facts
Recov'ring, and mistated setting right——
Desp'rate attempt, till trees shall speak again!

Time made thee what thou wast, king of the woods;
And Time hath made thee what thou art—a cave
For owls to roost in! Once thy spreading boughs
O'erhung the champaign; and the numerous flocks,
That graz'd it, stood beneath that ample cope
Uncrouded, yet safe-shelter'd from the storm.
No flock frequents thee now. Thou hast out-liv'd
Thy popularity, and art become
(Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing
Forgotten, as the foliage of thy youth!

While thus through all the stages thou hast push'd
Of treeship—first a seedling, hid in grass;

Then twig; then sapling; and, as cen'try roll'd
Slow after century, a giant-bulk
Of girth enormous, with moss-cushion'd root
Upheav'd above the soil, and sides imboss'd
With promi'nent wens globose—till at the last,
The rottenness, which time is charg'd to'inflict
On other mighty ones, found also thee.

What exhibitions various hath the world
Witness'd of mutability in all,
That we account most durable below!
Change is the diet, on which all subsist,
Created changeable, and change at last
Destroys them. Skies uncertain, now the heat
Transmitting cloudless, and the solar beam
Now quenching in a boundless sea of clouds,
Calm, and alternate storm, moisture, and drought,
Invigorate by turns the springs of life
In all that live, plant, animal, and man,
And in conclusion mar them. Nature's threads,
Fine, passing thought, e'en in her coarsest works,
Delight in agitation, yet sustain
The force, that agitates, not unimpair'd,
But, worn by frequent impulse, to the cause
Of their best tone their dissolution owe,

Thought cannot spend itself, comparing still
The great and little of thy lot, thy growth
From almost nullity into a state
Of matchless grandeur, and declension thence,
Slow, into such magnificent decay.
Time was, when, settling on thy leaf, a fly
Could shake thee to the root—and time has been
When tempests could not. At thy firmest age
Thou hadst within thy bole solid contents,
That might have ribb'd the sides and plank'd the deck
Of some flagg'd admiral, and tortuous arms,
The ship-wright's darling treasure, didst present
To the four quarter'd winds, robust aud bold,
Warp'd into tough *knee-timber, many a load!
But the axe spar'd thee. In those thriftier days
Oaks fell not, hewn by thousands, to supply
The bottomless demands of contest, wag'd
For senatorial honours. Thus to Time
The task was left to whittle thee away
With his sly scythe, whose ever-nibbling edge,

* Knee-Timber is found in the crooked arms of oak, which by reason of their distortion, are easily adjusted to the angle formed where the deck and the ship's sides meet.

Noiseless, an atom, and an atom more,
Disjoining from the rest, has, unobserv'd,
Achiev'd a labour, which had far and wide,
By man perform'd, made all the forest ring.

Embowell'd now, and of thy ancient self
Possessing nought, but the scoop'd rind, that seems
An huge throat, calling to the clouds for drink,
Which it would give in rivu'lets to thy root;
Thou temptest none, but rather much forbidd'st
The feller's toil, which thou could'st ill requite.
Yet is thy root sincere, sound as the rock,
A quarry of stout spurs, and knotted fangs,
Which, crook'd into a thousand whimsies, clasp
The stubborn soil, and hold thee still erect.

So stands a kingdom, whose foundation yet
Fails not, in virtue and in wisdom laid,
Tho' all the superstructure, by the tooth
Pulveriz'd of venality, a shell
Stands now and semblance only of itself!

Thine arms have left thee. Winds have torn them off
Long since, and rovers of the forest wild,

With bow and shaft, have burnt them. Some have left
A splinter'd stump, bleach'd to a snowy white;
And some, memorial none where once they grew.
Yet still life lingers in thee, and puts forth
Proof not contemptible of what she can,
Even where death predominates. The spring
Finds thee not less alive to her sweet force,
Than yonder upstarts of the neighb'ring wood,
So much thy juniors, who their birth receiv'd
Half a millennium since the date of thine.

But since, although well qualify'd by age
To teach, no spirit dwells in thee, nor voice
May be expected from thee, seated here
On thy distorted root, with hearers none,
Or prompter, save the scene, I will perform
Myself the oracle, and will discourse
In my own ear such matter as I may.

One man alone, the father of us all,
Drew not his life from woman; never gaz'd,
With mute unconsciousness of what he saw,
On all around him; learn'd not by degrees,
Nor ow'd articulation to his ear;
But, moulded by his Maker into man

At once, upstood intelligent, survey'd
All creatures, with precision understood
Their purport, uses, properties, assign'd
To each his name significant, and, fill'd
With love and wisdom, render'd back to Heav'n
In praise harmonious the first air he drew.
He was excus'd the penalties of dull
Minority. No tutor charg'd his hand
With the thought-tracing quill, or task'd his mind
With problems. History, not wanted yet,
Lean'd on her elbow, watching Time, whose course,
Eventful, should supply her with a theme;——

INDEX.

Page.

Return to Cowper at Eartham, ... 1

1792.

Letter.

1 To Mrs. Courtenay. Manner of spending his time at Eartham; epitaph on Fop, ... Aug. 25..1

2 To the Revd. Mr. Hurdis. On the death of his sister; invitation to Eartham, ... Aug. 26.. 4

3 To Lady Hesketh. Improvement in his health; his portrait by Romney, ... Aug. 26.. 7

4 To the same. On the beautiful scenery of Eartham; regrets on leaving it, ... Sept. 9..10

Cowper's return to Weston, ... 12

5 To W. Hayley, Esq. Account of his journey, .. Sept. 18..13

6 To the same. Same subject; visit to General Cowper; to Mr. Rose, &c. ..... Sept. 21..14

7 To the same: His spirits sink on the approach of winter, Oct. 2..17

8 To the same. Full of affectionate regard; on Hayley's verses to Dr. Austen, ... Oct. 13..19

9 To J. Johnson, Esq. Regret for his absence; on a sonnet to Romney, ... Oct. 19..21

10 To the same. Moral reflection on sitting for a picture, Oct. 22..22

11 To W. Hayley, Esq. Difficulty of exertion; sonnet to Romney, ... Oct. 28..23

12 To S. Rose, Esq. Compliment on his professional industry; hopes of future success, ... Nov. 9..26

Letter. Page

13 To J. Johnson, Esq. Difficulty in commencing his Milton, lowness of spirits, ... Nov. 20..28

14 To W. Hayley, Esq. same subject, ... Nov. 25 ..30

15 To J. Hill, Esq. Politics of the day, ... Dec. 16..31

16 To W. Hayley, Esq. On his confinement in consequence of his translating Milton, ... Dec. 26..34

1793.

17 To the same. On the arrival of Mr. Hayley's picture, Jan. 2..36

18 To the same. On the death of a friend, ... Jan. 29..38

19 To S. Rose, Esq. His translation of Homer, ... Feb. 5..40

20 To Lady Hesketh. TORYISM of Lady Hesketh and Mrs. Rose, ... Feb. 10..41

21 To S. Rose, Esq. On the Analytical Review of his Homer, Feb. 17..42

22 To the Revd. Mr. Hurdis. Professorship of poetry; discoveries in natural history, ... Feb. 22..44

23 To W. Hayley, Esq. His dream respecting Milton, Feb. 24..46

24 To the Revd. W. Bagot. Republicans of France, Mar. 4..49

25 To Mr. T. Hayley. On Mr. T. Hayley's strictures on his Homer, ... March 14..50

Mr. T. Hayley's Letter to Cowper, ...54

26 To W. Hayley, Esq. Revisal of his Homer, ..March 19..56

27 To S. Rose, Esq. Revised translation of Homer, March 27..58

28 To J. Johnson, Esq. Mr. Johnson's resolution to take holy orders, ... April 11..60

29 To W. Hayley, Esq. On the notes to his Homer, April 23..62

30 To the Revd. W. Bagot. On the death of those we love, May 4..63

31 To S. Rose, Esq. On the notes of his Homer, ... May 5..64

32 To Lady Hesketh. TORYISM of Lady Hesketh, ..May 7..67

33 To W. Hayley, Esq. Distribution of his time, .. May 21..68

Letter. Page.

34 To Lady Hesketh. With his verses to a young friend on his arrival at Cambridge wet, when no rain had fallen there. June 1..71

35 To the Revd. Mr. Hurdis. On the illness of Miss Hurdis, June 6..73

36 To W. Hayley Esq. On the proposal of a joint composition, June 29..75

37 To the same. On his projected poem of the Four Ages, July 7..77

38 To the Revd. Mr. Greatheed. On Mr. Greatheed's invitation, July 17..80

39 To W. Hayley, Esq. Improvements in his garden, July 24..82

40 To Lady Hesketh. On his lines and acknowledgments to Miss Fanshaw,.....August 11..85

41 To W. Hayley Esq. On his new buildings, and improvements, ...August 15..86

42 To Mrs. Courtenay. The treatment of Bob Archer by a roguish fiddler, ... August 20..89

43 To S. Rose, Esq. Notes to his Homer, ...August 22..91

44 To W. Hayley, Esq. On Flaxman's monument to Lord Mansfield, ... August 27..93

45 To Lady Hesketh. On Lady Hesketh's visit to Weston, August 29..96

46 To the Revd. Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson's present of a sun-dial, ...97

47 To W. Hayley, Esq. On his affected mirth, and real melancholy, ... Sept. 8..100

48 To Mrs. Courtenay. On Mr. Johnson's present of a sun-dial, ...Sept. 15..102

49 To the Revd. Mr. Johnson. On Mr. Johnson's visit to Weston,.....Sept. 29..104

50 To W. Hayley, Esq. On the visits and civilities, which wasted his time, ...106

51 To the same. On Mr. Hayley and his son's visit to Weston, Oct. 18..108

Letter. Page

52 To the Revd. J. Jekyll Rye. On Mr. Hurdis's election to the professorship of poetry at Oxford, ... Nov. 3..109

The author's second visit to Weston, ... 110

Lord Spencer's invitation of Cowper to Althorpe 111

The invitation declined on account of Mrs. Unwin's health, 111

53 To Mrs. Courtenay. Mr. Hayley's visit, ... Nov. 4..112

Declining health of Cowper and Mrs. Unwin, ... 114

54 To Joseph Hill, Esq. Beauties of Weston, ... Nov. 5..116

55 To the Revd. W. Bagot. Reflections on the French revolution, ... Nov. 10..118

56 To the Revd. Mr. Hurdis. On Hayley's life of Milton; his own commentary, ... Nov. 24..120

57 To S. Rose, Esq. Subjects for painting recommended; idea of a joint work with Hayley ..... Nov. 29..122

58 To the same. Thanking him for books, Jonathan Wild,—Man as he is, &c. ..... Dec. 8..125

59 To W. Hayley, Esq. Uneasy at not hearing from him; plan of continuing the Four Ages, ... Dec. 8..126

Origin of Cowper's projected poem on the four ages of man ——His billet to the Revd. Mr. Buchanan, 127 to 129——Commencement of the poem, 132....The health of Cowper declines ——The incident, that gave rise to the two last of his cheerful Letters, 138

60 To W. Hayley, Esq. Criticism on the address of Hector to his son, ... Dec. 17..138

1794.

61 To the same. Same subject, ... Jan. 5..141

The author induced to visit Weston during the severe illness of Cowper by a friendly exhortatlon from Mr. Greatheed, 146 ——The sufferings of the invalide——The ineffectual sympathy of his friends——The grant of a pension from his Majesty to Cowper, 153——After remaining at Weston under the care of Lady Hesketh till July 1795, Cowper and Mrs. Unwin remove to Norfolk under the conduct of his kinsman, the Revd. Doctor Johnson——Stanzas

to Mary, the last poem composed by Cowper at Weston, 158——Cowper resides at North Tuddenham——Removes to Mundsley, a village on the Norfolk coast——Removes to Dereham, and thence to Dunham Lodge, 166——Induced to revise his Homer in 1795.——In September he visits Mundsley again——In October returns to Dereham, and settles there for the winter——Gradual decline and death of Mrs. Unwin, 168——Cowper's solicitude on the last morning of her life; her funeral, and tablet to her memory, 170——The obstinate malady of Cowper——Fruitless endeavours to cheer his dejected spirit——Infinite merit of Doctor Johnson in his care to mitigate the calamity of his revered relation, 174——Cowper receives a visit from the Dowager Lady Spencer, 177——Extract from a Letter to Lady Hesketh, 178——Doctor Johnson reads to Cowper his printed and manuscript poems——He receives a visit from Sir John Throckmorton, 179——Finishes the revisal of his Homer, 1799—Resumes and quits his poem on the Four Ages——Composes a Latin poem, 180——His last original poem entitled "The Cast away," 182——Removes to a larger house in Dereham——Translates various Latin and Greek verses and some fables of Gay into Latin verse.

1800.

Sends an improved version of a passage in his Homer to his friend of Eartham——His health becomes more impaired——Receives a visit from Mr. Rose in March——Declines, and dies on Friday the 25th of April——Buried on the 3d of May in the church of Dereham, 188——Inscription on his monument, 189——His character, and remarks on his poetry——His opinion of the deference due to criticism, particularly from reviews, 206——Remarks continued to page 274.

POSTSCRIPT——Death of Lady Austen——Epitaph on that lady, 277.

INDEX TO THE APPENDIX.

Page.

No. 1 Original poems; 281

2 Translations of Greek verses, ... 297

3 Translations from Horace and Virgil, ... 319

4 Translations from the Latin poems of Bourne, and from a few epigrams of Owen, ... 345

5 MONTES GLACIALES, in Latin and English, ... 391

6 Verses to the memory of Dr. Lloyd, ... 397

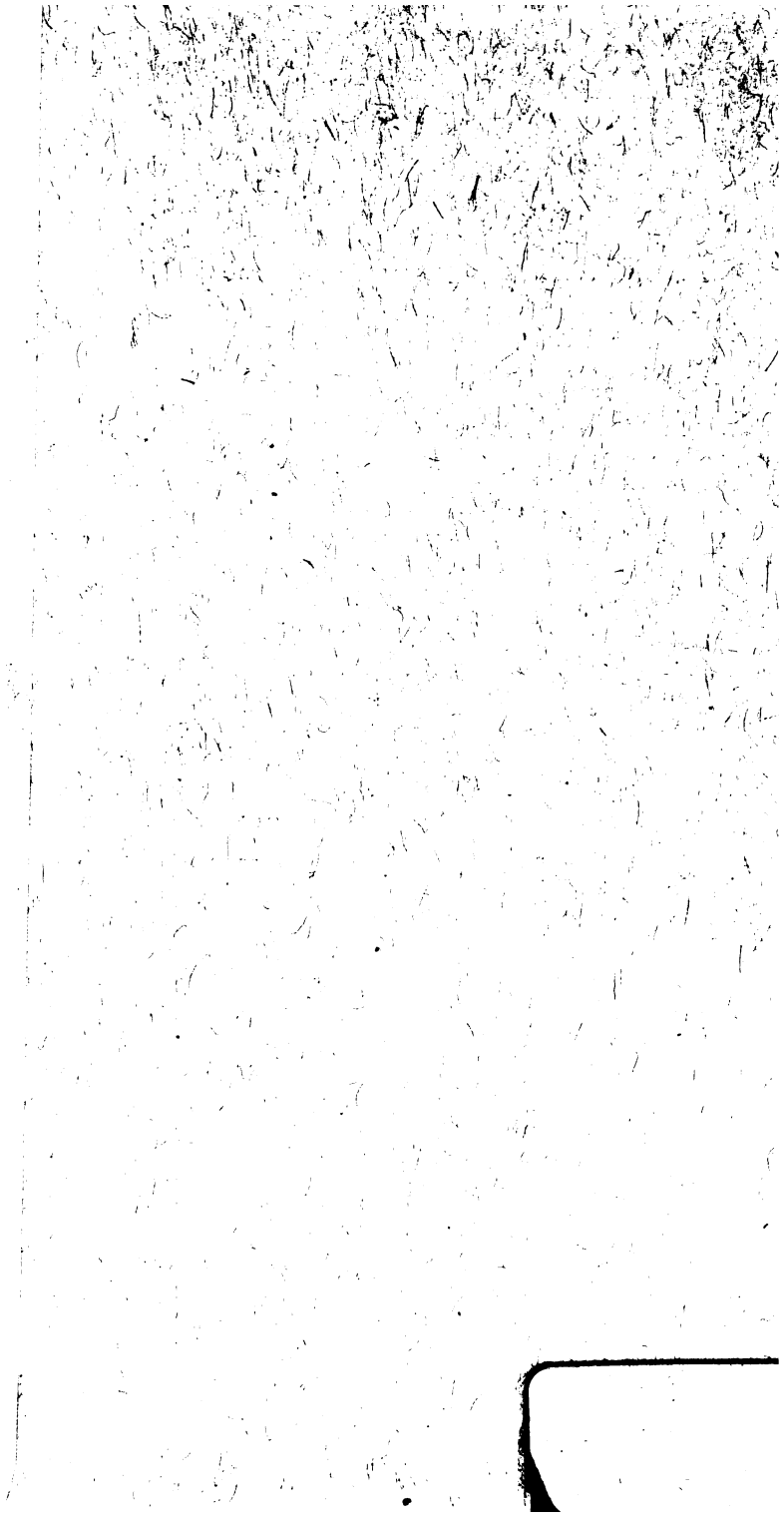
7 Translations from the fables of Gay, ... 401

8 The Connoisseur, Nos. 119, 134, and 138, ... 408

Motto on the king's clock, ... 431

Conclusion, ... 432

Circular Letter to those persons, who have honoured the intention of raising a Public Monument to Cowper, by entering their names on the list of subscribers 439

Yardley-Oak, a poetical fragment, ... 443

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